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The Shape of Things

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WHEN STEELMASTERS TALK TURKEY WITH labor leaders, be sure a new era of trade unionism is here. There are several factors behind the decision of Mr. Fairless of Carnegie-Illinois to talk terms with Mr. Murray of the C. I. O. The steel drive has been effective. The automobile victory has had its effect. The steelmasters do not want to invite trouble from the La Follette committee. And, in Mr. Roosevelt's present mood, they cannot count on him in fighting a strike.

*

THE PEOPLE STAND BEFORE THE ORACLES still waiting for a decision on the Wagner Act cases. The court last Monday handed down another decision, upholding the abrogation of the gold clause in private contracts. The same five justices lined up against the same four as in the similar case two years ago. There are other cases more pressing. But with so much dynamite around, one can understand why the oracles are silent.

*

HARRISON WILLIAMS HAS EMERGED FROM his obscurity as husband of the world's best-dressed woman into a sudden limelight of his own as America's Public Utility Man Number 1. Testimony before the SEC disclosed his personal control of almost one-fifth of the entire public-utility business of the United States. By retaining 51 per cent of the stock of the Central States Electric Corporation, a holding company, he poised on the top of a pyramid whose base was seven separate utility companies, the assets of each of which were in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Beside the fantastic tale of Mr. Williams's manipulations, the construction of the Van Sweringen railroad empire seems like a corner-grocery-store transaction. In 1923 a share of Central States was selling at $10.50; in 1929 the same share cost $5,600, an appreciation of 53,000 per cent. Before the crash Mr. Williams had recovered his initial investment of $2,072,000; later he sold enough stock to escape the panic with $27,200,000 in cash while still retaining 51 per cent of the holding-company stock. Through this stock he now "influences the management" of public utilities worth $2,875,000,000. Counsel for the SEC several times asked, "That is not imaginary, is it?" to make sure he was not in a dream world. But it was a nightmare to the stockholders who, unlike Mr. Williams, when the crash came lost two-thirds of their investment in Central States.

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ANDRE MALRAUX, THE AVIATOR, FRESH FROM Madrid's front line, has the artist's power to make real in words the present tragedy in Spain. His speech at *The Nation's* dinner last Friday evening, like that of Louis Fischer, made a profound impression on the 700 listeners. "There are many kinds of suffering in this world," Malraux said, "but there is one kind which it is a privilege to endure—the suffering of those who suffer because they are striving to make a world worthy of men. . . . Each of you may choose his own way of relieving this suffering. But relieve it you must!" The audience responded to M. Malraux's appeal by contributing the impressive sum of $9,138, in amounts ranging from $1 to $1,000, to *The Nation's* Food Ship Fund, which was formally inaugurated at the dinner. It was a good beginning, but only a beginning. There can be no question of the moral obligation of democratic peoples to sustain with food the lives and the spirits of the noncombatant women and children of republican Spain. *The Nation's* Food Ship must be filled to overflowing.

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WE TAKE SAM D. McREYNOLDS OF TENNESSEE at his word. In explaining Section 5-a of his revised neutrality resolution, he made it clear that the ban on contributions to governments at war refers to loans and credits and not to donations. But we call upon him to make the text of the resolution clearer, so that no question may later arise. To do otherwise would be to travesty the whole American tradition of aiding the struggle for freedom. The loyalist fortunes in Spain continued to prosper last week. On the Jaramba River the government forces held. At Oviedo they pushed on steadily, with Franco's men contesting every street. This is what would undoubtedly happen also if the fascist troops entered Madrid: every inch of the way would have to be fought for. Meanwhile a serious loophole remains in the plans for an international patrol of Spain. The proposal for an air patrol did not go through, and there is nothing to prevent Italian and German airplanes from landing on Spanish soil. Clearly a coastal and border patrol is not enough. The first known American casualty of the war is Ben Leider, formerly a flying reporter for the New York *Post,* killed in action on February 19.

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TO RATIFY THE CHILD-LABOR AMENDMENT the assent of eight more states is needed. In Massachusetts and New York the Catholic hierarchy is exerting its enormous influence against ratification. Cardinal O'Connell in Boston and Cardinal Hayes in New York in their control over the faithful have a very effective political instrument. As we go to press it looks as if the amendment would certainly be defeated in Boston and probably also in Albany, although it passed the Senate before the Catholics began applying pressure. It will not do for progressives to rage at the church or condemn it out of hand. Until we have more definite evidence that the cardinals are deliberately playing into the hands of the sweatshop employers, we must assume their sincerity. It is likely that their guiding motive is fear for the souls of the hordes of Catholic children who will be released from work and for whom the parochial schools, especially the high schools, have no adequate facilities. The poll of the American Institute of Public Opinion showed 76 per cent of the nation and majorities in all forty-eight states to be in favor of the amendment; we therefore call upon all progressive Catholics to make clear to their church that it cannot afford to take its present reactionary position.

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SOMETHING IS HAPPENING TO THE TEACHERS of the nation. Ten years ago they constituted a peculiarly inert and submissive body of citizens, almost afraid of their own shadows and frightened by the slightest noise from the political roadside. Today, perhaps because of their experience with professional heresy-hunters, they are beginning to show courage and social intelligence. This observation is supported by the proceedings of the recent New Orleans meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. The program as a whole reached the highest level of social and educational analysis in the history of the department. The convention was throughout dominated by the personality and the ideas of John Dewey, hitherto a bogy to school administrators, now made an honorary life member of the department. The superintendents also listened to and applauded realistic and honest analyses of the social situation by George S. Counts, Jesse Newlon, Harry E. Barnes, George Norlen, and John Studebaker. The unfortunate indorsement of the Sheppard-Hill conscription bill by the convention stemmed clearly from a lack of understanding of its real significance.

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OUR NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS ARE STAGING a pitched battle of their own over the President's proposal that makes the Senate fight seem pacific. In the forefront of the antagonists of the plan are the Three Invincibles of the *Herald Tribune.* Walter Lippmann, "sick at heart," calls it "the greatest crisis in seventy years"; Dorothy Thompson, hurling soprano thunderbolts, tells us we are "ripe for ruin"; and Mark Sullivan points a shaking finger down the road to fascism. Then we have David Lawrence, who with a sob in his throat apostrophizes the spirit of George Washington to save us from "the arch foes of our national welfare." In heavily documented arguments he is supported by Franklyn Waltman and Frank Kent. Passing to the fence-sitters, we have Arthur Krock, imperturbable on the Olympian heights of objective journalism, while Westbrook Pegler, a little out of his depth, adopts "an attitude of suspicion." The President's supporters number Jay Franklin, unexcited but cogent; Heywood Broun, half serious, half humorous, always nimble and persuasive; Raymond Clapper, who quietly, steadily, day after day, gives us some of the best arguments for the President's proposal; and finally the greatest phrase-maker of them all, General Johnson, still smarting from the Dred Schechter decision, and delighted to be in the thick of battle again.

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GOVERNOR WILBUR CROSS OF CONNECTICUT is a gentleman and a scholar. Governor Harry Hoffman of New Jersey is made of commoner stuff. But they are brothers under the skin when the sit-down strike is the issue. For now Governor Cross too has announced that he will close Connecticut's doors to the C. I. O. In his case there is irony in the fact that he was carried into office on the wave of progressivism which is at present controlled by the Democratic Party but which may go forward under its own power any November now. Meanwhile the sitdown which evoked the Governor's outburst is interesting in its own right. The Electric Boat Company at Groton, which works exclusively on government contracts, announced early this year that the work week was to be increased from 36 to 40 hours and that this was not a bargaining issue with the company union. It based this high-handed procedure on Navy Department practice, ignoring the fact that wages for 40 hours in the navy yards are equivalent to those for 44 or 48 hours at Groton. The C. I. O., in the form of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers, stepped in and is conducting the fight against an 11 per cent addition to the working week without extra pay.

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IN THE DEADLOCK OVER THE WALSH-HEALEY Act, the Navy Department and the steel companies are still engaged in trying to out-sit each other. Meanwhile Senator Walsh has laid before the Senate evidence which makes it the more important for the government not to yield. He has shown that in six specific cases in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Illinois factories under government contract are working their labor under appalling conditions. Hours as long as ninety-nine a week and wages as low as $6 a week were reported. These were not isolated but typical cases of many violations of the Walsh-Healey Act. In connection with the La Follette committee's evidence showing how Governor Hoffman has played ball with strike-breaking agencies, these facts reveal that the South has no monopoly of sweatshop conditions.

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EUGENE VIDAL'S RESIGNATION AS HEAD OF the Bureau of Air Commerce is part of a general shake-up among Dan Roper's sentinels of the air lines. The two assistant directors, J. Carroll Cone and Rex Martin, are being mercifully sent abroad to study foreign conditions. There is a danger that Mr. Vidal, whom the report of the Copeland Committee on Air Safety described as negligent and "too amiable" to be efficient, will be made a scapegoat for the sins of Secretary Roper, who, as Robert S. Horton pointed out in *The Nation* of January 23, bears the ultimate responsibility. The Interstate Commerce Commission celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year. It would be a fitting birthday gift to transfer the control of aviation to the relatively efficient hands of the commission. A bill to this effect has been pushed in Congress by Senator McCarran, and hearings on it are scheduled to start soon. It remains to be seen whether the Roper shake-up comes too late to affect these hearings.

Is It to Be Buchanan?

THE President is having the fight of his life on the Supreme Court issue, and from all evidence the time of his life. The concerted tory barrage that has been trained on his proposal has brought out all his qualities of militancy and strategy. As a general in the midst of battle, he knows how and when to bring up the heavy battalions. First of all, the Sumners-McCarran bill, granting full-pay retirement pensions to Supreme Court judges over seventy, which both houses have now passed. Then, the marshaling of such hard-hitting radio warriors as Governor La Follette and Harry Hopkins. Then the scheduled fireside talk by the President himself on March 9, to be followed by the Senate committee hearings. Most important is the staccato effectiveness with which the President daily brings up measure after measure to underscore his argument that unless the Supreme Court intrenchments are blasted out, the whole future legislative program will suffer.

The strongest statement of the argument thus far is to be found in the masterly interview Mr. Roosevelt gave to Arthur Krock, published in the New York *Times* of February 28. The interview was more than a scoop for Mr. Krock; it was a triumph for the President. As if to set himself off against the hysteria of the Republicans and their new allies, Mr. Roosevelt talked with a deep and reasonable seriousness, far removed from the blood and sweat of the battlefield.

He brushed aside all talk of a third term or a dictatorship. "When I retire to private life on January 20, 1941," he said, "I do not want to leave the country in the condition Buchanan left it to Lincoln." The comparison sets one thinking. Mr. Roosevelt sees the country entangled in problems that need solving. He expects a civil war unless "the solving process begin[s] at once." And, to adopt an Edgar Hoover phrase, Public Problem Number 1 right now is the Supreme Court.

This interview, we take it, is the President's real second inaugural address, far more adroit and profound than the insipid rhetoric that mingled with the Washington rain on January 20. But in sharp contrast with the Krock interview we present Paul Ward's article in this issue showing how meager may be the President's legislative program, even after he has put through his judicial plan. The net result, says Mr. Ward, will be to make our unbalanced economy even more unbalanced, and prepare the next depression. And when that comes it will make fertile soil for a new civil war.

Here is a prospect that cannot be brushed aside with a phrase. Progressives must face it. They must distinguish, however, between the merit of Mr. Roosevelt's legislation and the immediate issue of the Supreme Court power. Even if, by combining the Roosevelt proposal with a movement for an amendment, the judicial hurdle could be overcome, the problem of really grappling with our economic difficulties would remain. Conversely, even if the progressives could contrive an adequate legislative program, they could do nothing with it as long as the

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judges blocked their path. The problem is a dual one. Progressives must support the President in his efforts to deal with the judicial power. And Mr. Roosevelt must understand, once he has a clear road, that if he does not smash the forces that are making for a new depression he may turn out to have been a Buchanan after all.

Newspaper into Theater

THE New York Newspaper Guild and the WPA Theater project have combined to produce in "Power"—the current offering of "The Living Newspaper"—a unique piece of art. Its theme is the search of Everyman (the consumer) for cheap electric power with which to make a better life. The play employs an extraordinary sequence of lighting, a screen on which charts, cartoons, and photographs are thrown, a loud speaker off stage, fast dialogue, quick shift of scene, and a mass of characters (which the Federal Theater Project was invented to make use of). Through these the consumer, a character humorously stylized and extremely well acted, is shown pursuing his perilous path, beset by holding companies, utility propaganda, the not so "fair rate base," and above all the overpowering visage of monopoly. Senator Norris, however, sees him through, and by a series of dramatic and highly informative stages—the bibliography of "Power" is heavily interspersed with the titles of government reports—the consumer reaches the promised land of TVA, while the audience cheers and the TVA song rings out. The first act is the longer and better of the two which make the play. The ending suffers, dramatically speaking, because there is no resolution—but to this criticism must be joined the observation that there can be no resolution until the Supreme Court hands down its decision on the decree of Judge Gore restraining the TVA from proceeding with its task.

Everything about "Power" is actual, including the TVA song, which is an authentic, contemporary Kentucky mountain ballad set down by Jean Thomas as sung to her by Jilson Setters. The unit of the piece is the fact; each fact is accurate (see the bibliography); and the author of the play, Arthur Arent, proves what journalists have always maintained—that an accurate fact carefully aimed may be as deadly as a bullet. As a result, "Power" makes an impact on the mind comparable to that of the best polemic. At the same time Mr. Arent and his colleagues have devised out of the cold facts a moving and dramatic entity, which has the qualities of newspaper and play and movie, yet is none of these but something new.

It is an old truth as well as an old saw that every newspaperman has a play in his system. Many a newspaperman has written a play, but "Power" is the play that has been in the newspaperman's system. It is indigenous and it brooks no condescension. The writing has been stripped of the stage sentimentality and the pompous poetics that might make a good reporter squirm—and cause many a conventional play to lag; the humor is sharp and fast; the production as a whole is excellent.

Let La Follette Go On!

FORCES behind the scenes are actively at work to bog down the labors of the La Follette committee investigating the state of civil liberties. Those labors were hard enough by their very nature. The genius of the Pinkertons and all the lesser members of their unsavory tribe is to conceal their tracks as they move. The committee at every turn met obstacles in the shape of destroyed records, blank denials, and general amnesia. But the spy system has allies even stronger than itself. The purchasers of its "services" and their lawyers and their fellow-travelers in the Senate have banded together to see to it that the investigation is further hamstrung through lack of funds, unfavorable publicity, court delays, and legislative interference.

A few details will help to show the outlines of the conspiracy. The committee began at the bottom, among spies, gunmen, gas bombs, vigilantes, and fake police. Presumably the direction of the probe was to be upward; but so far no industrial great gentleman has been called to account about his stool pigeons and machine-guns. The inquiry is still mired. The Pinkertons, for instance, on advice of counsel (Cravath, De Gersdorff, Swaine, and Wood, who slew the NRA) defied the committee to probe into their records. The Senators had been doing their best, wringing reluctant monosyllables from witnesses, tracing their tortuous machinations in behalf of General Motors. La Follette had even adjured a Pinkerton official by name, "Pugmire, come clean." An unreasonable request when you come to think of it. In the end the committee declared in effect: for half a year you have lied to us, spirited witnesses away, destroyed records, doctored your books; therefore we demand the names of your army of secret operatives that we may question them. Again, no, on advice of counsel; no, in the name of humanity, lest exposed spies be "jeopardized."

Then the investigation encountered new hurdles. A release was sent out to its 208 subscribing newspapers by the McClure syndicate hinting that strong ties exist between the La Follette committee and the C. I. O. and that the whole strategy of the committee was aimed at supporting Lewis in his negotiations at Detroit. In the House, appropriation bills suddenly sprouted riders designed to prohibit Congressional committees from borrowing trained investigators from government agencies. La Follette's helpers from the WPA and the Resettlement Administration were lopped off. Another rider attempted to cut off agencies such as the National Labor Relations Board. Despite Presidential advice, and despite the passionate interest of labor telegraphed from every quarter, Congress has helped the obstructive conspiracy of spy companies and big industries.

Only a public pressure in support of the committee stronger than the private pressure of the interests can enable La Follette and his colleagues to squeeze the facts out of the men who really control the whole system of spies and thugs and private armies—the Sloans, du Ponts, Schwabs, Girdlers, Graces, and Weirs.

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A Program for Farm Tenancy

THE chances that something may be done for America's three million farm-tenant families have been increased in recent weeks by the report of the President's Farm Tenancy Committee and Mr. Roosevelt's subsequent recommendations to Congress. The need is appalling. A recent study by the Division of Social Research of the Works Progress Administration* showed that the average net income of wage hands, share-croppers, and other tenants in 1934 in eleven areas of the South was $309 per family, or $73 per person. Many families received much less. The average family income for wage labor was $180 a year, varying from $213 in the Arkansas River area to $70 in the interior plains. Share-croppers had an average family income of $312, but in the lower Mississippi Delta region the average was only $154, or $38 per capita. Some share-croppers reported incomes of less than $100 for the year.

If these incredibly low incomes were simply a matter of landlord exploitation, a solution could perhaps be devised, but the problem is inextricably linked with the sickness of the economy of the South as a whole, and with its political backwardness.

The recommendations of the President's Farm Tenancy Committee will be taken as a starting-point for at least the type of program which is needed. It is evident, for example, that the problem can only be solved through the generous use of government credit such as was granted to the banks, the railways, and owner-farmers in their hour of distress. The proposal to use this credit to establish a few of the more capable tenants and small owners is, however, as Mr. Amberson points out elsewhere in this issue, both dangerous and unrealistic. It leaves the basic problem of tenancy untouched, and places the new owner in a position where he cannot hope to compete on equal terms with the large landowner. The proposal to place the new Farm Security Administration under the Department of Agriculture is also open to serious criticism, in view of the fact that the department has consistently been dominated, as Secretary Wallace has admitted, by the wealthier farmers. A new agency should either be independent, like the Social Security Board, or be subordinated to the projected Department of Social Welfare, if the plan for departmental organization is adopted. In connection with the recommendation for state arbitration committees and for the repeal of the tenant-contract laws, it need only be pointed out that the state legislatures are completely dominated by plantation owners and the present status of the tenants is largely their handiwork.

We find the report of the committee extremely vague, moreover, regarding a program for education, medical care, and vocational training, which all agree must be carried out simultaneously with economic reorganization. The Resettlement Administration has done a good job in certain areas, but when one considers the widespread prevalence of disease, the sloth and ignorance of the croppers, and their lack of any experience in diversified agriculture, it is evident that its activities are but a sample of what needs to be done on a greatly expanded scale. Hence we find a growing conviction on the part of students of the problem that the only solution lies in cooperative enterprises. The one-crop system has been the bane of the South. Individual farmers with 30 or 40 acres can hardly be expected to develop a system of diversified agriculture such as the region requires. Farm cooperatives could not only do this but also make use of the latest mechanized aids and at the same time serve as ideal units for the project's educational activities.

Government paternalism may prove no more helpful than the plantation system, however, in developing the independence and initiative so seriously needed among these underprivileged families. In the long run they will find that they cannot depend on aid from the outside, but will have to fight for their rights as labor has done. To this end every aid and encouragement must be given to organizations such as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. This may be done by amending the Wagner Labor Relations Act to cover farm-labor and tenant organizations and extending the conciliation service of the Department of Labor to include farm workers. Even with these advantages the lot of farm workers in the South will be difficult until there is a fundamental reorganization of the Southern economy along planned lines.

OUR TENANCY PROGRAM

1. *An independent federal agency to be established to continue the educational, health, and advisory services of the Resettlement Administration on a greatly enlarged scale.*
2. *The basic land problem to be solved, as far as possible, by the use of federal credit to encourage the formation of farm cooperatives which would permit diversification of crops and the full use of mechanized aid.*
3. *The Wagner Labor Relations Act and the Social Security Act to be amended to cover farm labor as well as industrial labor.*
4. *The Department of Labor to be empowered to extend its conciliation services to include farm laborers and tenants.*

* "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation." By T. J. Wooster, Jr., Works Progress Administration.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Planning the Next Depression

Washington, March 1

WHAT comes next, after the Supreme Court has been reorganized? That question is giving greater concern to a little group of men here in Washington than the increasingly slight possibility that Mr. Roosevelt may be denied authority to pack the court. Those who worry about the answer are the select few in the Roosevelt Administration who take the long view and see things whole. They are the real Brain Trust, these dozen or so economists and lawyers; and I think I detect in them a fear that Roosevelt will not know what to do after his best excuse for puttering and inaction has been obliterated. I can report with certainty, however, nothing more than that the real Brain Trust is united in two beliefs.

Its members hold that the New Deal has wrought very little fundamental change in the nation's economic structure. They also hold that nearly all the old evils that brought about the depression of 1929 and the following years are now engaged in a wild, cancerous proliferation that promises another and worse crash in a few years. It is only in their forecasts of the date of the next recession that they differ. One group, to which belong such men as Mordecai Ezekiel and Louis Bean, has it scheduled for 1940. The other group, typified by Leon Henderson, thinks the blow-off likely to come next year unless drastic steps are taken to arrest present trends.

There isn't sufficient space here to set forth the elaborate logarithmic charts by which these schedules of doom are contrived. But Leon Henderson, formerly head of NRA Research and Planning, is one person who speaks your language and mine. He would tell you straight off that there is very real danger that any gains obtained from remolding the Supreme Court will be lost through poor legislation, and he would point to present prospects of a revival of the NRA along the lines of the Richberg-Draper and American Bar Association proposals. These treat labor standards—minimum wages and maximum hours—as unfair trade practices instead of prescribing such standards as socially desirable and economically necessary. Worse still, they treat competition as a series of relationships between nasty and nice business men, instead of as the mainspring of a system which must have elasticity if the imminent depression is to be handled.

The net result of such legislation—and it is the only type of legislation for which Roosevelt and his lieutenants are clearing the Supreme Court deck—can be nothing more or less than further rigidity in the price structure, further gypping of the wage-earner and consumer. The controls by which steel and other industrial giants were able to keep up their prices during the depression that began in 1929, while their production tumbled and they spewed men out into the army of unemployed, are now to be extended by legislative fiat to all the other trades and industries that can't manage their affairs like the big boys without the government's help. The drive is overwhelmingly in that direction. We already have the Robinson-Patman Act, which started out as a scheme for guaranteeing the wholesaler a permanent, profitable existence at the consumer's expense, missed the mark, but perpetrated other evils in kind. Now we have a dozen supplementary measures pending in Congress. There is the Tydings-Miller bill, waiving the anti-trust laws so that such organizations as the National Association of Retail Druggists may force reluctant manufacturers into resale price-maintenance contracts in those states which have blessed such contracts with "little NRA" laws. The Supreme Court recently validated the Illinois and California versions of these laws, which have been passed by fifteen states and have the effect in their price provisions of gearing distribution down to the level of the least efficient retailer. In the final analysis, these laws mean that if any man chooses to start a drugstore, grocery store, or notion shop, you and I must pay all the practitioners of his trade in the city, county, or state prices as high as those which he must charge to make a profit—no matter how little excuse there is for his existence.

That is at bottom the purpose of the new Patman bill, which would prevent manufacturers from having retail outlets and thus preserve the existence of the least efficient wholesaler; and to some extent it also is the purpose of Congressman Celler's anti-"loss-leader" bill and of the proposals for "trade-practice" legislation that have come out of George L. Berry's Council for Industrial Progress. Berry's outfit is beating the drum for legal prohibition of retail "loss leaders" and "sales below cost." On top of this we have pending in Congress the Guffey-Vinson coal bill and the Connally oil bill, both of which enjoy Administration support to some extent. The Guffey bill is little more than a scheme for assuring profitable prices to the least as well as to the most efficient coal mines, and the Connally bill, which has Secretary Ickes's backing, would do the same for the oil producers. In line with both is Congressman Lea's bill which ostensibly provides for regulation of interstate transportation of natural gas. Then comes the Bar Association proposal for legislation obligating the government to enforce "voluntary agreements" entered into by business men. Add to these bills the whole mass of agricultural price-control and production-control legislation that farm leaders are demanding, with Secretary Wallace cheering them on, and you begin to get at least the outline of the strait-jacket in prepara-

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tion for the body politic. Instead of decent consumer legislation, fortification of the anti-trust laws, patent-law revision, housing legislation, and all the other instruments which might be applied to thawing out the price structure, we are compounding a formula for strangling capitalism in its own contradictions.

That is scarcely the sort of death to be desired for capitalism at such a time as this, with another depression hovering over the horizon. It is a prelude to fascism. Consider the plight in which we shall find ourselves when the crash comes. As Henderson points out, we shall still have on our hands some 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 unemployed, and we shall have only the beginnings of a social-security system and a reciprocal trade-agreements program. We shall have in addition the highest debt in history, all mixed up with public commitments of the "budget-balancing" and "no more taxes" variety, plus a real inflation threat resulting from a price level that at this very moment is soaring close to the danger mark. We shall still be in the grip of an unrelenting technological advance that, as will probably be shown by the WPA study of productivity changes that David Weintraub is directing, has an inexhaustible capacity for setting at naught any federal efforts to reduce unemployment through maximum-hour legislation. We shall be faced with an even greater concentration of ownership than that which confronted us in 1929, as the report of the Twentieth Century Fund indicates. We shall find the owners, as represented by the great corporations, better able to withstand pressure of the 1933 variety through their strengthened cash positions. We shall find that the "break-even" line on costs has moved down in the interim so that many concerns can cover their cash outlays when operating at less than 50 per cent of capacity. And we shall find the position of intrenched wealth further fortified by its control of business through monopolies, cartels, trade associations, mergers, and the like. These the New Deal has fostered to such a degree that it is possible now for such an organization as the Cotton Textile Institute to boast, without fear of prosecution under the Webb-Pomerene Act, that it has conspired with Japanese mill interests to restrict their shipments to the United States and jack up prices in exchange for a promise that the institute will see to it that this country's textile tariffs remain at their present levels. Finally, out of this will come a compulsion on the central government to prevent serious depression, a drive that will be stimulated by the Administration's claim that it halted the last decline, produced the current recovery, and has established fiscal controls over the economic tides. For an Administration that in such matters always has followed the course of least resistance there will be left only one way to turn, and that avenue bears no signpost "To the Public Good."

I Accuse the Hitler Regime

BY THOMAS MANN

[The Nation *is proud to publish this exchange of letters* in which for the first time the greatest living German writer clarifies at some length his attitude toward the Nazi regime.*]

Bonn, December 19, 1936

TO HERR THOMAS MANN, WRITER: By the request of the Rector of the University of Bonn I must inform you that as a consequence of your loss of citizenship the Philosophical Faculty finds itself obliged to strike your name off its roll of honorary doctors. Your right to use this title is canceled in accordance with Article VIII of the regulations concerning the conferring of degrees.

DEAN——(signature illegible)
The Philosophical Faculty of the Frederick-William University on the Rhine

TO THE DEAN OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN:

I have received the melancholy communication which you addressed to me on the nineteenth of December. Permit me to reply to it as follows:

The German universities share a heavy responsibility for all the present distresses which they called down upon their heads when they tragically misunderstood their historic hour and allowed their soil to nourish the ruthless forces which have devastated Germany morally, politically, and economically. This responsibility of theirs long ago destroyed my pleasure in my academic honor and prevented me from making any use of it whatever. Moreover, I hold today an honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy conferred upon me more recently by Harvard University. I cannot refrain from explaining to you the grounds upon which it was conferred. My diploma contains a sentence which, translated from the Latin, runs as follows: ". . . we, the President and Fellows with the approval of the honorable Board of Overseers of the University in solemn session have designated and appointed as honorary Doctor of Philosophy Thomas Mann, famous author, who has interpreted life to many of our fellow-citizens and together with a very few contemporaries sustains the high dignity of German culture; and we have granted to him all the rights and privileges appertaining to this degree."

In such terms, so curiously contradictory to the current German view, do free and enlightened men across

* Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter and printed through the courtesy of Alfred A. Knopf.

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the ocean think of me—and, I may add, not only there. It would never have occurred to me to boast of the words I have quoted; but here and today I may, nay, I must repeat them. If you, Herr Dean (I am ignorant of the procedure involved), have posted a copy of your communication to me on the bulletin board of your university, it would gratify me to have this reply of mine receive the same honor. Perhaps some member of the university, some student or professor, may be visited by a sudden fear, a swiftly suppressed and dismaying presentiment, on reading a document which gives him in his disgracefully enforced isolation and ignorance a brief revealing glimpse of the free world of the intellect that still exists outside.

Here I might close. And yet at this moment certain further explanations seem to me desirable or at least permissible. I made no statement when my loss of civil rights was announced, though I was more than once asked to do so. But I regard the academic divestment as a suitable occasion for a brief personal declaration. I would beg you, Herr Dean (I have not even the honor of knowing your name), to regard yourself as merely the chance recipient of a communication not designed for you in a personal sense.

I have spent four years in an exile which it would be euphemistic to call voluntary since if I had remained in Germany or gone back there I should probably not be alive today. In these four years the odd blunder committed by fortune when she put me in this situation has never once ceased to trouble me. I could never have dreamed, it could never have been prophesied of me at my cradle, that I should spend my later years as an émigré, expropriated, outlawed, and committed to inevitable political protest. From the beginning of my intellectual life I had felt myself in happiest accord with the temper of my nation and at home in its intellectual traditions. I am better suited to represent those traditions than to become a martyr for them; far more fitted to add a little to the gaiety of the world than to foster conflict and hatred in it. Something very wrong must have happened to make my life take so false and unnatural a turn. I tried to check it, this very wrong thing, so far as my weak powers were able—and in so doing I called down on myself the fate which I must now learn to reconcile with a nature essentially foreign to it.

Certainly I challenged the wrath of these despots by remaining away and giving evidence of my irrepressible disgust. But it is not merely in the last four years that I have done so. I felt thus long before, and was driven to it because I saw—earlier than my now desperate fellow-countrymen—who and what would emerge from all this. But when Germany had actually fallen into those hands I thought to keep silent. I believed that by the sacrifice I had made I had earned the right to silence; that it would enable me to preserve something dear to my heart—the contact with my public within Germany. My books, I said to myself, are written for Germans, for them above all; the outside world and its sympathy have always been for me only a happy accident. They are—these books of mine—the product of a mutually nourishing bond between nation and author, and depend on conditions which I myself have helped to create in Germany. Such bonds as these are delicate and of high importance; they ought not to be rudely sundered by politics. Though there might be impatient ones at home who, muzzled themselves, would take ill the silence of a free man, I was still able to hope that the great majority of Germans would understand my reserve, perhaps even thank me for it.

These were my assumptions. They could not be carried out. I could not have lived or worked, I should have suffocated, had I not been able now and again to cleanse my heart, to give from time to time free vent to my abysmal disgust at what was happening at home—the contemptible words and still more contemptible deeds. Justly or not, my name had once and for all become connected for the world with the conception of a Germany which it loved and honored. The disquieting challenge rang in my ears: that I and no other must in clear terms contradict the ugly falsification which this conception of Germany was now suffering. That challenge disturbed all the free-flowing creative fancies to which I would so gladly have yielded. It was a challenge hard to resist for one to whom it had always been given to express and release himself through language, to whom experience had always been one with the purifying and preserving Word.

The mystery of the Word is great; the responsibility for it and its purity is of a symbolic and spiritual kind; it has not only an artistic but also a general ethical meaning; it is responsibility itself, human responsibility quite simply, also the responsibility for one's own people, the duty of keeping pure its image in the sight of humanity. In the Word is involved the unity of humanity, the wholeness of the human problem, which permits nobody, today less than ever, to separate the intellectual and artistic from the political and social, and to isolate himself within the ivory tower of the "cultural" proper. This true totality is equated with humanity itself, and anyone—whoever he be—is making a criminal attack upon humanity when he undertakes to "totalize" a segment of human life—by which I mean politics, I mean the state.

A German author accustomed to this responsibility of the Word—a German whose patriotism, perhaps naively, expresses itself in a belief in the infinite moral significance of whatever happens in Germany—should he be silent, wholly silent, in the face of the inexpiable evil that is done daily in his country to bodies, souls, and minds, to right and truth, to men and mankind? And should he be silent in the face of the frightful danger to the whole continent presented by this soul-destroying regime, which exists in abysmal ignorance of the hour that has struck today in the world? It was not possible for me to be silent. And so, contrary to my intentions, came the utterances, the unavoidably compromising gestures which have now resulted in the absurd and deplorable business of my national excommunication. The mere knowledge of who these men are who happen to possess the pitiful outward power to deprive me of my

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German birthright is enough to make the act appear in all its absurdity. I, forsooth, am supposed to have dishonored the Reich, Germany, in acknowledging that I am against them! They have the incredible effrontery to confuse themselves with Germany! When, after all, perhaps the moment is not far off when it will be of supreme importance to the German people not to be confused with them.

To what a pass, in less than four years, have they brought Germany! Ruined, sucked dry body and soul by armaments with which they threaten the whole world, holding up the whole world and hindering it in its real task of peace, loved by nobody, regarded with fear and cold aversion by all, it stands on the brink of economic disaster, while its "enemies" stretch out their hands in alarm to snatch back from the abyss so important a member of the future family of nations, to help it, if only it will come to its senses and try to understand the real needs of the world at this hour, instead of dreaming dreams about mythical "sacred necessities." Yes, after all, it must be helped by those whom it hinders and menaces, in order that it may not drag down the rest of the continent with it and unleash the war upon which as the *ultima ratio* it keeps its eyes ever fixed. The mature and cultural states—by which I mean those which understand the fundamental fact that war is no longer permissible—treat this endangered and endangering country, or rather the impossible leaders into whose hands it has fallen, as doctors treat a sick man—with the utmost tact and caution, with inexhaustible if not very flattering patience. But it thinks it must play politics—the politics of power and hegemony—with the doctors. That is an unequal game. If one side plays politics when the other no longer thinks of politics but of peace, then for a time the first side reaps certain advantages. Anachronistic ignorance of the fact that war is no longer permissible results for a while of course in "successes" against those who are aware of the truth. But woe to the people which, not knowing what way to turn, at last actually seeks its way out through the abomination of war, hated of God and man! Such a people will be lost. It will be so vanquished that it will never rise again.

The meaning and purpose of the National Socialist state is this alone and can be only this: to put the German people in readiness for the "coming war" by ruthless repression, elimination, extirpation of every stirring of opposition; to make of them an instrument of war, infinitely compliant, without a single critical thought, driven by a blind and fanatical ignorance. Any other meaning and purpose, any other excuse this system cannot have; all the sacrifices of freedom, justice, human happiness, including the secret and open crimes for which it has blithely been responsible, can be justified only by the end—absolute fitness for war. If the idea of war as an aim in itself disappeared, the system would mean nothing but the exploitation of the people; it would be utterly senseless and superfluous.

Truth to tell, it *is* both of these, senseless and superfluous, not only because war will not be permitted it but also because its leading idea, the absolute readiness for war, will result precisely in the opposite of what it is striving for. No other people on earth is today so utterly incapable of war, so little in condition to endure one. That Germany would have no allies, not a single one in the world, is the first consideration but the smallest. Germany would be forsaken—terrible of course even in her isolation—but the really frightful thing would be the fact that she had forsaken herself. Intellectually reduced and humbled, morally gutted, inwardly torn apart by her deep mistrust of her leaders and the mischief they have done her in these years, profoundly uneasy herself, ignorant of the future of course but full of forebodings of evil, she would go into war not in the condition of 1914 but, even physically, of 1917 or 1918. The 10 per cent of direct beneficiaries of the system—half even of them fallen away—would not be enough to win a war in which the majority of the rest would only see the opportunity of shaking off the shameful oppression that has weighed upon them so long—a war, that is, which after the first inevitable defeat would turn into a civil war.

No, this war is impossible; Germany cannot wage it; and if its dictators are in their senses, then their assurances of readiness for peace are not tactical lies repeated with a wink at their partisans; they spring from a fainthearted perception of just this impossibility. But if war cannot and shall not be—then why these robbers and murderers? Why isolation, world hostility, lawlessness, intellectual interdict, cultural darkness, and every other evil? Why not rather Germany's voluntary return to the European system, her reconciliation with Europe, with all the inward accompaniments of freedom, justice, well-being, and human decency, and a jubilant welcome from the rest of the world? Why not? Only because a regime which, in word and deed, denies the rights of man, which wants above all else to remain in power, would stultify itself and be abolished if, since it cannot make war, it actually made peace! But is that a reason?

I had forgotten, Herr Dean, that I was still addressing you. Certainly I may console myself with the reflection that you long since ceased to read this letter, aghast at language which in Germany has long been unspoken, terrified because somebody dares use the German tongue with the ancient freedom. I have not spoken out of arrogant presumption, but out of a concern and a distress from which your usurpers did not release me when they decreed that I was no longer a German—a mental and spiritual distress from which for four years not an hour of my life has been free, and struggling with which I have had to accomplish my creative work day by day. The pressure was great. And as a man who out of diffidence in religious matters will seldom either by tongue or pen let the name of the Deity escape him, yet in moments of deep emotion cannot refrain, let me—since after all one cannot say everything—close this letter with the brief and fervent prayer: *God help our darkened and desecrated country and teach it to make its peace with the world and with itself!*

THOMAS MANN

Kusnacht, Zurich, New Year's Day, 1937

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J. Edgar Hoover

BY KENNETH G. CRAWFORD

II

J. EDGAR HOOVER'S enormous success in building up the Federal Bureau of Investigation—and J. Edgar Hoover—with the seasoned methods of national publicity has not made him exactly popular with his colleagues in the subcabinet ranks of government service. Members of the older government detective agencies, particularly postal inspectors and Secret Service men, regard Hoover as an upstart, mulcting them of credit both for jobs they might have done and for work they actually have done.

These officers insist that Hoover's headline-stalking has delayed solution of some of the most spectacular of recent criminal cases and actually threatens to become a serious drag on law enforcement. They have words and music for their hymn of hate. They complain of the boss G-man's insistence upon announcing his achievements, and many of theirs, in Washington rather than on the scene, his tendency to talk too much while the chase is on, and his still more unfortunate propensity, once the capture has been made, for detailed description of the steps leading up to it. They even say that a smart criminal who wants to know how to avoid arrest need only follow Hoover's publicity trail.

Rival detectives may of course exaggerate the consequences of his garrulousness. They have been left at the post so often in the race to claim credit for a cooperative capture that they are embittered. There is no doubt that Hoover is faster on the draw—at least of the telephone. Moreover, it cannot be denied that he has surrounded himself with smart young men who often get results.

Hoover himself may not be a better cop than his competitors but he is certainly a better advertising man. Several comic strips portray the Sherlock Holmes cunning of the G-men. Semi-official sanction is claimed for the most popular of them, called "War on Crime," with continuity by a Washington newspaperman who has long been a friend of Hoover. At the top of each strip appears the legend, "True stories of G-men activities based on the records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation—modified in the public interest." It is exciting stuff about gun molls and their hoodlums, who are always outwitted by the Hoover boys.

Grisly radio programs with hair-raising sound effects are Hoover's second line of public offense. Their theme is that crime does not pay. They have a semi-official status and are likewise prepared by his journalistic friends. The vogue for G-men movies also had its day, but it seems to be passing. Courtney Ryley Cooper reaches the more literate segment of Hoover's public with his own books (the latest is "Here's to Crime") and with magazine articles, some of which are ghost-written for Hoover, some alleged to be the product of collaboration, and others frankly written by Cooper himself. Walter Winchell, another admirer, catches the not-so-literate with his frequent references to the G-men's exploits.

Thousands of tourists who visit Washington every year take in Hoover's chamber of horrors in the new building of the Department of Justice along with the cherry blossoms and the Smithsonian Institute. At the Hoover museum they may gaze with awe at the straw hat Dillinger wore on that last fateful day—it is preserved under glass—and at other significant trophies.

Hoover cultivates reporters and correspondents with nice discrimination. Those who play ball with him are rewarded with exclusive information when big news breaks. This appraisal, because it was destined for *The Nation,* had to be written without benefit of a personal interview. His attitude toward reporters, together with his practice of writing long letters of protest to newspaper editors who print articles uncomplimentary to the head of the F. B. I., has not contributed to Hoover's popularity with the bulk of the working press. Neither has the conviction of some newspapermen that Hoover has had them "tailed."

Hoover's flair for the dramatic shows itself in his shoot-to-kill orders. He has no sympathy for the "maudlin sentimentality" of those who would reform criminals or alter the conditions that produce them. He is a harsh critic of the parole system. The science of criminology, so far as Hoover is concerned, begins and ends in his F. B. I. laboratory, where blood stains and locks of hair can be analyzed. At a meeting of the International Association of Police Chiefs at Atlantic City in 1935, he spoke as follows:

> Here at this meeting a criminal is understood to be a criminal, with a gun in his hand and murder in his heart. It is not necessary here, in discussing what shall be done with the human rat, to persuade some altruistic soul that he is not a victim of environment or circumstances or inhibitions or malformed conciousness, to be reformed by a few kind words, a pat on the cheek, and freedom at the earliest possible moment. . . .
>
> Indeed, it would seem that such [criminal] enemies were numerous enough and deadly enough without the addition of an even vaster army of antagonists. But there are more, and they are the ones who today form the handicaps of all in the field of law enforcement. I refer to the sob-sisters, the intruders, the uninformed and misinformed know-it-alls, the sentimentalists, and the alleged criminologists who believe that the individual is greater than society, that if any criminal can display or simulate even the slightest evidence of ordinary conduct, then indeed he must be a persecuted being, entitled to be sent forth anew into the world to again rob and murder.

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Hoover's speeches are revealing. In a more recent address before the Daughters of the American Revolution he betrayed his conviction that a large proportion of the people in the United States are criminals. The horrified Daughters, already a-twitter over the Communist who hides behind every lamp post, were solemnly assured that American criminals marching eight abreast could not get by their marble hall between sun-up and sun-down.

Hoover's attitude toward criminals should endear him to the police. Certainly it indicates that he leads no Boy Scout outfit even though his agents must be college graduates (most of them are lawyers) between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age. But there is a growing volume of evidence to the contrary. The reason is that he is constantly committing two sins which police cannot forgive: he talks too much; and he doesn't do right by stool pigeons.

Detective novels to the contrary, a stool pigeon is more valuable than a magnifying glass in the solution of crimes, particularly of crimes committed by gangs. The police, and Hoover is no exception, place principal reliance on squealers, not clews, when looking for an underworld character. Consequently the stool pigeon is carefully protected by city departments and most government agencies. But Hoover must let the world know after a crime has been solved how it was done. While he does not name the informer, he often comes close enough to cast suspicion on the right man, thus destroying the future usefulness of the talker.

The Dillinger affair is cited by Hoover's critics as a case in point. There can be little doubt that Mrs. Anna Sage, the woman in red who walked out of the Biograph Theater in Chicago at Dillinger's side but stepped back soon enough to get out of the line of fire, was the tipster responsible for his death, and that detective Marc Zarcovich of East Chicago was the man who set the trap. Mrs. Sage has said that Melvin Purvis, head of the Chicago G-men bureau at the time of Dillinger's shooting, promised her immunity from deportation in exchange for her help in the biggest of F. B. I. coups. Whether he did or did not, she was deported.

Although Hoover made the announcement of Dillinger's execution and got full credit for it, one of the ablest crime reporters in the country, who covered the search and later the flamboyant obsequies, said in an article written for a newspaper chain in 1935 that the G-men were "more to be censured than praised." Even then, he wrote, there was a conspicuous lack of cooperation between the F. B. I. and other agencies hunting the outlaw. He recounted four instances of "poor police work" by Hoover's men in connection with Dillinger's many escapes. On one occasion, he reported, armed G-men and Indiana state police almost shot it out between themselves, each mistaking the other for the Dillinger mob because the G-men failed to notify state authorities of their presence in the area of operation.

The feud between the F. B. I. and the Secret Service was brought into the open last year, also in connection with the Dillinger hunt. The details have never been entirely clear, but it is known that Middle Western operatives of the Secret Service took it upon themselves, with or without prompting from Washington, to check up on circumstances surrounding the deaths of the Indiana desperado and Eddie Green, one of his less prominent henchmen, who was shot by G-men in a raid on his St. Paul apartment. The T-men—the Secret Service is under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department—believed that both bandits could easily have been captured alive had the G-men wanted to bring them in walking.

Getting wind of the investigation, Hoover ran to his favorite newspaper with the story and demanded punishment of the Secret Service men responsible. He was backed up by Cummings. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, to whom Hoover is a source of constant annoyance, reluctantly set down Joseph Murphy, then second in command to William H. Moran, veteran chief of the Secret Service, and Grady L. Boatwright, agent in charge at St. Paul. A few months later Morgenthau restored Murphy to his old job.

Hoover's vindictiveness not only sent the two Secret Service men to exile in outlying precincts but cost them temporary salary reductions—which hurt more. Whereas Hoover draws $10,000 a year, the chief of the Secret Service gets only $8,000 and Kilroy P. Aldrich, able head of the Post Office inspectors, $7,000. There is a like disparity between the pay of rank-and-file G-men and operatives of the other agencies.

Both the Post Office inspectors' service and the Secret Service claim to have been undercut repeatedly by Hoover. In scores of cases, they say, their men have built up the evidence and located the criminals only to have the F. B. I. step in for the kill and the credit.

On at least one occasion the Treasury men, according to their story, ran the victim to the ground and captured him unassisted but still couldn't beat Hoover to the newspapers. Victor (the Count) Lustig, a notorious counterfeiter, was captured by the Secret Service and turned over to the Justice Department for incarceration in its New York detention quarters. Lustig escaped. Again he was trailed by the Treasury operatives, this time to a hide-out near Pittsburgh. T-men solicited help from G-men in making the raid, but the latter were slow in starting. On their way out they met the Secret Service party coming back. The Count was already in gyves. The G-men, following standing instructions, immediately reported the capture to their chief, who announced it to the press without mention of the Treasury.

City police, like the federal agencies, are thoroughly fed up with Hoover's telephonitis. When Harry Brunette, a small-time hoodlum charged with kidnapping a New Jersey state policeman, was cornered in an apartment in West 102d Street in New York City, G-men, with Hoover personally in command, literally smoked him out, setting fire to the building. The G-men also gave New York an exciting demonstration of machine-gunning, in which Brunette's girl friend was wounded. Police Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine, who up to that time had been tolerant of Hoover's theatricals despite several previous run-ins with the F. B. I., made public a

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letter accusing the federal forces of needless shooting. Hoover was further accused of violating an agreement by starting the raid without notifying the New York police. According to the police, arrangements had been made to keep the apartment under surveillance until Brunette's accomplice in the kidnapping could be trapped with him. It appears that the two city detectives assigned to the vigil were out getting a cup of coffee when Hoover ordered the raid. Hoover denied everything; and Cummings was "not interested in the matters about which small minds dispute."

Such conflicts, whoever is at fault, make for lack of cooperation between federal and local law-enforcement agencies. They are occurring with increasing frequency, and almost every big case of the last two years has brought on a postmortem quarrel. Hoover has accused Post Office inspectors of withholding information and getting in the way. The police forces of Chicago, St. Paul, Salt Lake City, New Orleans, and Seattle as well as New York have complained of Hoover.

Friction between Seattle officials and the F. B. I. over the Mattson case has generated so much heat that there remains only a thin pretense of collaboration. Ironically, the Lindbergh case, which started the ground swell of public revulsion that carried Hoover to his present peak, actually was solved by Treasury agents and local officials. It was Frank Wilson, new chief of the Secret Service, who devised the elaborate system of checking the numbers on ransom notes that finally tripped Bruno Richard Hauptmann. Lindbergh himself wanted the G-men taken off the case.

For the benefit of his more squeamish admirers Hoover professes to be shocked at the notion that he has ever designated a Public Enemy Number 1 or ordered his agents to bring a criminal in dead. But after Pretty Boy Floyd was shot down by G-men in 1934, Hoover remarked that he was "just a yellow rat who needed extermination" and announced that Baby Face Nelson was "next in line." "Of course we admit some sentiment in the matter," a Washington reporter quoted Hoover at the time. "When one of these yellow curs kills one of our men, we are going to get him and will never stop until we do. That was one of the things we had against Floyd, which caused him to be referred to as Public Enemy Number 1. By that standard, the title will pass to Baby Face Nelson . . . we hope to get him soon." Baby Face Nelson was shot to death some time later—at the cost of two G-men's lives.

[*The first part of Mr. Crawford's article appeared last week.*]

Forty Acres and a Mule

BY WILLIAM R. AMBERSON

WITH President Roosevelt's appointment of a Special Committee on Farm Tenancy* national interest in the plight of our agricultural laborers, particularly in the South, reached a climax. Three years of unprecedented publicity had lifted these humble workers to the center of the national stage. Yet at the very moment when concern about their plight appears to be at a maximum there is grave danger that the American people may fail again, as they failed once before, to understand the basic factors in the Southern agrarian problem and to find a fundamental solution.

If history teaches anything about the tenancy problem, it is that in our present economic system, with its business cycle and its rapacious middlemen, the small independent farmer cannot maintain himself and tends to disappear. The newer and richer the land the more rapid is this trend. The land passes into the control of fewer and fewer owners, with banks and insurance companies assuming an ever more important role as land operators. In each new farming community tenancy shortly engulfs a major fraction of the population. It soon becomes not only the most prominent economic and legal aspect of rural social structure but a most unwholesome psychological state, demoralizing both landlord and tenant.

There are many factors which contribute to this social disease. We will mention only one. Forty acres of good rich land are enough to maintain any family in normal years. But some years are not normal. And the mule, traditionally supposed to be attached to each sixteenth part of a section, is an uncertain quantity. Rain or drought, he must be fed. He sickens and dies. At his best he furnishes just one mule-power, and under the stress of modern competitive conditions this is not enough. The big planter across the road, with his tractor and four-row equipment and his superior credit facilities, cultivates his cotton for $5 an acre, while the mule, dragging a half-row plow, runs the bill up to over $14 (by actual experimental tests at the Stoneville Experiment Station). Sooner or later a crop failure sweeps away the little man's reserves, and the planter forecloses a mortgage on his land given two years before to raise money for the doctor who brought the last baby into the world. The next year the little man is a tenant on the big farm, which now includes his own former acres.

So tenants are made and so they will continue to be made, as surely as God makes little green apples and cotton bolls, unless we, as a nation, do some deep and serious thinking and some wise and careful planning. Yet with distressing frequency amateur theorists in this field miss the lesson of our fable and turn backward

* The Committee's report and President Roosevelt's recommendations in regard to farm tenancy are discussed editorially on page 257 of this issue.

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toward the frontier tradition. Once all men were little men, and the mule was a great improvement over hoeing by hand. In those days all men were free and equal. Therefore, runs the argument, let us return to that Golden Age of the Republic, and dole out little homesteads to all the needy people.

Such theorists neglect several stubborn facts. In the first place, the frontier is gone. It is gone not only horizontally but vertically. The days are over when it is cheaper to move than to control soil erosion. Even now men are retreating from much of our former tilled acreage, as wind and rain strip away the precious top soil of badly managed land. Rural poverty, on most soils, is reached in twelve vertical inches. A good half of our present farms are useless or in serious jeopardy. Good land is hard to get; no surplus remains.

In the second place, the big planter across the road is a stubborn fact. His trucks and tractors enable him to raise his crops much more efficiently than can the little man. He has his rights under the law, and if he is big enough he can modify and change the law, or even rewrite it closer to his heart's desire—and economic interest. He has no wish to sell out and move to town, at least not now when prices are on the up and up, and governmental benefits swell his more direct profits. He is sorry for the little man. But business is business, and the best —that is, the biggest—man wins. It is the law of the system.

On both counts the road back to the Golden Age becomes very steep and rocky indeed. Where is the country to which our distressed millions shall go for land? Submarginal lands, torn and gutted by a century of misuse, can of course be purchased by the square mile for a few dollars an acre. The government has recently purchased millions of such acres and is putting them back to forest and pasture, where they belong. Such country can support a sparse population—perhaps as many people as live there now. But rural rehabilitation cannot be accomplished in this manner.

We may as well face the fact that, by some device, tenants and croppers in order to become owners must, by and large, get possession of the good land which they now till. They cannot be moved from their present acreage en masse to hillside havens or fertile jungles, leaving the planter and his sons disconsolate behind to run all the tractors and pick all the cotton.

There is much pious talk now, even in landlord circles, about the plight of the share-cropper and the necessity for his redemption. Each landlord hopes that the other fellow's tenants will be given their chance in life. His own tenants, of course, are relatively well off, and no change in their status is necessary. He will try to allow his people an extra half-cent a pound on their cotton next year, and perhaps cut the commissary charge to fifteen cents on the dollar. But no union monkey business!

Listen to the Delta Chamber of Commerce:

> The program of financial assistance should be carefully drawn with a view to helping the ambitious, thrifty, industrious individual to help himself, rather than a general bestowal of gratuities on persons who, although needy and deserving help, lack the above-mentioned qualities so necessary if they are successfully to manage and operate their own farm business.
>
> It is as futile to expect the majority of our agricultural workers to own their own farms as to expect most of the clerks to own their own stores or industrial workers their factories.
>
> The setting up of government-owned and operated farms for (the majority of) such workers, no matter whether the title to the land be vested in the government or the individual, is unsound and un-American, and is peonage of the worst sort.
>
> It puts the government, in fact, directly and definitely into the private business of farming in direct competition with its own tax-paying farm citizens. It cannot be tolerated in a democratic government if that government is to survive.

Democracy thus receives a new definition, which unfortunately, most of America will unthinkingly accept. These statements are typical of the confusion of thought in which the present plans for new tenancy legislation are being drawn. The masters of America are in no mood for a vigorous attack upon this problem. At best they are only willing to operate around the edges, rescuing selected groups here and there. To date government has done no more than this, but it is already meeting stout resistance. What would be the outcry if it should move to cut out the cancer, retire the present landlords, take over the plantations, and present the people with convenient fragments of the great estates, or, alternatively, hold them intact and run them in the people's interest under staffs of socially minded experts?

Such an operation would outrage every conviction of our inherited individualism. Moreover, it would assume colossal financial dimensions. Good cotton land brings from $30 to $100 an acre. To give 1,000,000 tenant and cropper families their forty acres and a mule would cost the nation not less than $2,000,000,000, and an equal sum would have to go into new housing, equipment, and furnishings. The experience of the Resettlement Administration and the estimates of other experts agree that the average cost of such rehabilitation would run between $4,000 and $5,000 per family, on the present market. No figures are yet available showing the average cost for a completely cooperative project. It would almost certainly be considerably less. In the first year of operation the cost on the Delta Cooperative Farm has run about $1,000 per family, including full payment on the land. Its equipment, however, is far from complete, and its housing is purely temporary. Moreover, much of its land remains to be cleared.

To wipe out all tenancy in America on the individualistic basis would require at least $12,000,000,000, and more probably $15,000,000,000, that is, half of the total value of our present farms. It requires no gift of prophesy to assert that nothing like this is going to be done. The rulers of America are not prepared to pay any such price to recapture the vanished benefits of an alleged Golden Age. Even if the operation could be carried out, we should have no assurance that a final stability had been attained.

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The same forces which have made tenants in the past would continue to operate.

In one respect the gentlemen of the Delta Chamber of Commerce are entirely correct. The majority of Southern rural workers are not ready for land ownership. We have to do here with the human wreckage of an iniquitous century-old social system in a land which never knew the wholesome frontier life of other regions. For five generations these people have been habituated to the present economic mode. We are here dealing with a vast rural population of no fewer than five million whites and three million Negroes who are so thoroughly demoralized, so ignorant and irresponsible, so dirty, ragged, and diseased, that one may well doubt whether they can ever be reclaimed. Most of these people have never owned land, or they lost it three generations back.

Even when they try to get it they face almost certain defeat. I have been watching the pathetic efforts of some of these poor families to "donate" a small patch of state land. They pay a small fee and get a dubious title. Again and again they fall into debt for their food and see the land which they have painstakingly cleared go to another. I know one colored man who has started three times to win his own farm by this route. Each time he has lost out after years of labor. The last time his own lawyer connived with his exploiter to "sell him down the river." He has just been evicted from the last soil which he thought to call his own.

We are powerfully moved, therefore, to the conclusion that such fragmentation of the plantation as is now being widely proposed would be a blunder of the first magnitude. Whether we begin our argument with an emphasis on technical efficiency or start with an appreciation of the low culture of these laboring masses, we arrive at the same conclusion. Large-scale cooperative farming ventures are in this region the only hope for the majority. The efficiency of the large plantation must be retained and increased, not destroyed. These confused folk must be brought together into new types of village communities. The light of a vigorous educational program must illumine these darkened lives. Adequate medical services must rescue them from their chronic sickness. They must learn together to build a new hope and faith under socially minded leaders of their own region. This is the "middle way" for the agricultural South, steering between plantation exploitation on the one hand and the inefficiency of the small homestead on the other. Even the Chamber of Commerce gives guarded consideration to such a program. Its confusion of thought, however, persists. "The average large Delta farm is a privately owned and operated cooperative, with the tenants enjoying a sizable percentage of the returns." Shades of the Rochdale pioneers!

These people can rise again. The racial stocks are basically sound. Future hope for this great community shines out from the bright eyes of its children, not yet dimmed by the privations of adult life. Human material fit for a higher destiny lives in these shacks and hovels. But it is raw and untutored—an easy prey to the greed and prejudice which cannot soon be banished from this scene.

The Resettlement Administration has had much preliminary experience with these deep-rooted habits of the cotton belt. Administrative difficulties have embarrassed the program. High administrative costs at the top have not been matched by new efficiency at the bottom. The ghost of states' rights haunts the work, preventing strong federal control. The idealism of Washington is often highly diluted in the field. Local administrators are frequently plantation owners who run the government farms much as they have always run their own lands. The commissary racket may still flourish on the side. Government checks have been held up for months, forcing the people back upon the old credit system with its inflated charges. Families may still be evicted without settlement of their accounts, because of union affiliation or as part of a definite local scheme of exploitation. The people remain perplexed and distrustful, confused by frequent changes in policy and personnel. Here and there a socially minded director is making history.

Many students of this problem view with dismay any proposal to shift Resettlement activities back to the Department of Agriculture, directly or indirectly. The department has never shown any will to grapple with the problems of the rural under-dog. Its programs have been written by landlords for landlords. Its whole organization is tied in with the land-owning class. By and large it has no comprehension of, or sympathy for, the tenant and cropper. The department's contribution to technology has been superb, but it is not a sociological instrument, and it should not be asked to become one. A strengthened and reorganized Resettlement Administration, fully devoted to the interests of the present landless class, is the only answer.

Years must pass before any appreciable change in the situation can be effected. Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that by the present gestures we are solving the problem of tenancy. Tenants are being made faster than any program so far proposed can liquidate them. Let us recognize that the next few years are an experimental period in which we are hammering out new models for rural life. This time we must not fail.

More and more Resettlement and Rural Rehabilitation, its smaller twin, have embraced the cooperative ideal. They are issuing excellent material on cooperative technique. That technique, particularly on the production side, is difficult indeed. It is all the more difficult because America has so few precedents for it in its own economic history. Group ownership of land presents new legal, as well as new pyschological, problems. For the various projects a corps of devoted and highly trained administrators must be found. By trial and error we must drive through to successful patterns valid for the American community. In the last analysis a cooperative farm will find its proper milieu only in a cooperative commonwealth.

In 1865 there was much talk about forty acres and a mule for the freedmen. No one meant it then. Few really mean it now. Even fewer realize its inadequacy, in this land and time. At best it was a poor slogan. Dixie's millions wait for a new plan and a new leadership which will really take them to their Promised Land.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Haiti, 1937

Port-au-Prince, February 7

IT WAS on August 7, 1934, that the usurping United States flag was finally hauled down and the Haitian hoisted in the city of Port-au-Prince. Three years previous the departments of public works, public health, agriculture, and industrial education had been turned over to their rightful managers, the Haitians. But this formal end of American rule, save for the financial control still exercised by the American fiscal representative in the interest of American bondholders, meant the beginning of a new epoch in Haitian history.

How are things going? Can the Haitians go it alone? Have they profited by the American occupation? Is it going to be the same old story of mismanagement, waste, corruption, and turbulence? These questions are of thrilling import when one recalls that this is the greatest experiment in self-government by colored men in all the world; that Haiti is the second oldest republic in this hemisphere; that the 3,000,000 men and women who live here are descendants of the black men who, unaided, threw off the yoke of slavery and defeated in succession the picked troops of England, France, and Spain.

Two and one-half years of walking alone are hardly a conclusive test, especially when the Haitians have not had control of their national finances. But the average American resident here believes that the country is off to a good material start and that the old conditions are not likely to recur. The American occupation did a poorer job here than in Santo Domingo. But the marines did accomplish certain things. They taught the Haitians the necessity of organization. They imbued them with a great concern for public hygiene and sanitation, though this work would be far more efficient today if the Haitians had been allowed a greater measure of collaboration in the days of American rule. They built some roads—not many—and demonstrated that good roads are the key to advancement in every phase of the national life. And they ordered well the public finances.

But there the list of American achievements just about ends. There was no vision, no building for the future. The usurpers were naval officers, not trained civilian administrators, and they knew that they were not there to stay. They built a material but not a moral order. As Dantès Bellegarde has put it: "Unfortunately they did not know how to establish moral order; that is to say, the peace assured by respect for law and its observance, imposed on all citizens alike. The American heads displayed an absolute contempt for lawful procedure. They overturned constitutions and laws which annoyed them and had constitutions and laws drawn up which could serve their own interests, without regard for public morality." If this was understandable in view of the American disrespect for law at home, it set an evil example abroad, one which, as we shall see, has already borne evil fruit.

When the American flag came down, Haiti was in the grip of the world depression, and even today it must meet all its expenses, including the debt service, from a revenue of only $6,500,000. As President Vincent put it to me: "In a hundred years our population has trebled and our national budget has remained the same." What is more, only a small proportion of the $8,000,000 debt which burdens the country was actually used for public works or public enterprises, and so Haiti, beginning its new career, prays that the world price of coffee—coffee constitutes 80 per cent of its exports—will rise, since Haiti lives on export and import duties. This is obviously a mistaken economic policy, but one that cannot be avoided when real-estate, personal, and income taxes cannot be imposed. Under the new treaty with the United States negotiated by Secretary Hull, Haiti has the assurance that no tariff duties will be levied on its principal exports in the United States market. But Haitian coffee has not a wide American market, and the government must make every effort to seek new outlets for its chief crop. Moreover, Haiti is the victim of a shipping conspiracy which actually makes it cost about 35 per cent more to ship an automobile from New York to Port-au-Prince than from San Francisco to Shanghai.

These touching, law-abiding, patient, and uncomplaining black people, who are bringing multitudes of babies into the world, need everything. No one starves to death in Haiti, for the rich soil produces enough fruit to keep body and soul together, but the laborers are often weak for lack of properly nourishing food. Beyond shelter, the simplest of garments, a mat or bed to sleep on, the bulk of the people have nothing whatever. Their densely populated soil (103 persons to the square kilometer, contrasted with 73 in France and 14 in the United States) is not studded by many villages or towns. Each family lives by itself, or with a couple of neighbors, in its banana or coffee patch, as remote from the culture and life of the modern world as are the tribes in the heart of Africa. As one sees these people in never-ending parade on their few roads, the great majority of the pilgrims being women walking with their burdens on their heads or riding on their little donkeys, one has the feeling that the scene is just about like Palestine in the Biblical ages. Certainly the wages go back that far, for the prevailing rate paid by the government on its public works is only 30 cents a day. The average servant in the towns earns from $4 to $10 a month.

But the desire for progress is here. The people want

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a modern state, and already there are signs of returning prosperity. Fully 1,000 houses have been built in and about Port-au-Prince in the last two years, charming flower-embowered homes perched on the hillsides, contrasting painfully with the hovels of the poor. The thirst for education is apparent too, for in almost every street there are schools, public and private, high schools and church schools, one after the other. There is a fine new orphanage, sponsored by the President; there is a reform school for boys, whose active director tells you that many of his wards are the offspring of members of the American occupation force. There is a new national museum building. But the Port-au-Prince hospital of which the authorities are so proud is starved for lack of funds, as is the health service everywhere. And if the capital has its dark spots, the other cities I saw were even more depressing. There are many ruins of houses at Cap Haiten; and Fort Liberté, once so thriving, is now, owing to earthquakes and other forces, a wreck that recalls the war-devastated French villages.

But after all it is the presiding head of a government which usually gives that government its direction and force and influences the observer's judgment of what the real promise of the immediate future is. The ruler of Haiti is Sténio Vincent. The name recalls a day in 1921 when he, Pauleus Sannon, Perceval Thoby, Pierre Hudicourt, and one other arrived at the offices of *The Nation* to ask for aid in freeing Haiti from American control. None of us imagined that within nine years one of that group would be the head of the Haitian Republic. President Vincent is a man of high education, genuine culture, great dignity, and quiet demeanor. He is a fine speaker with none of the volubility or excitability of the Latin. He is socially minded, public-spirited, and so genuinely eager to improve social conditions in Haiti that he gives freely out of his own pocket—as in constructing some model two-room houses in what Port-au-Prince calls the "Cité Vincent." His integrity is beyond question. Yet the fact remains that President Vincent is a dictator, however benign. For he has breached the constitution, overriding it by a plebiscite which everybody admits was fraudulent and thereby doing away with the Presidential election of 1936 and seating himself for a second term. He holds the press in the hollow of his hand; indeed, it is the general belief that the newspapers have another source of revenue than advertising, subscriptions, and sales. All newspapers are licensed, and licenses are not granted to those which the dictator does not wish to be published. No meeting, not even a religious one, can be held without a permit from the military authorities, and there are in prison in Cap Haitien some seventeen men arrested a year ago simply, so they insist, for criticizing some of the President's policies. They have never been brought into court, but there they are. Is it any wonder that the old liberal group with whom President Vincent was affiliated in the fight for Haitian independence looks upon him much as did American liberals upon Woodrow Wilson after he had changed from the progressive leader of 1912 into the reactionary and autocratic war-time President?

But if this Haitian group is dismayed and disheartened, it has not the slightest intention of opposing the President. They scoff at any talk of a revolt even if peaceable criticism and opposition are denied, and they are sincere in their desire to have their old friend become a successful, wise, and farsighted President. They would dread and oppose any revolution, for they wish beyond all else that there shall be no more foreign occupations. But they hold to their old democratic ideals and their faith in the ability of the Haitian people to govern themselves well, despite their backwardness, superstition, and illiteracy.

Those who speak for the President declare that pure democracy will be impossible until the people are educated —for years and years; that the President had to be made supreme over the national legislature because a minority blocked legislation which the Executive "had to have." They claim, like Hitler, that the plebiscite was a "legal" measure since the constitution came originally from the people and the people therefore had a right to amend it—they say nothing about the corruption which accompanied the vote. They defend the suppression of the press because, they say, "our journalists are not like yours," and they denounce their newspapermen as vindictive, libelous, utterly irresponsible, shameless in their personal attacks—just such language as I have heard applied to William Randolph Hearst and many another American journalist; could any Haitian journalist be worse than were the Bonfils brothers of Denver? The answer is, of course, neither licensing, nor suppression, nor purchase. There are libel laws in Haiti and doubtless laws against slander as well. The remedy is to turn to the courts for aid, not to destroy the profession. Haiti, like any other country, needs intelligent free discussion of its innumerable grave problems, and its present ruler ought to be just as ready to pay the price of personal abuse and misrepresentation as were George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. It was Sténio Vincent himself who on one occasion said: "Where are the keen intellectual frays of former times, the discussions—admittedly violent at times, but more interesting than the atrocious silence which has been imposed [by the American naval officers] on the citizenry?" Today it is the author of these words who enforces upon his countrymen an "atrocious silence."

The President's distrust of his people goes so far that he is the most heavily guarded ruler I have seen in all my travels. If he goes to the country club, the road leading out there has its sentries; at least fifty men guard the clubhouse, and he arrives surrounded by ten or twelve officers. Yet I am sure that he needs no more guards than does President Roosevelt. I certainly heard no criticism of him that would lead me to believe he need fear an attack upon his life or his government. At any rate there is not the slightest danger of revolution as long as the standing army of 2,800 men which he maintains to police the country is loyal to him.

[*The second part of Mr. Villard's article on Haiti will appear next week. In succeeding issues he will describe conditions in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.*]

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BROUN'S PAGE

Those Liberals Again

WALTER LIPPMANN, the columnist, has hit upon one device which is useful to the members of his craft. Quite often during the appropriate season he is called upon to deliver a baccalaureate sermon, and on such occasions he uses the speech as his newspaper piece for the next day. If it's good enough for Walter, it ought to be good enough for me.

I want to submit not a sermon but a short speech which I made before a dinner of the Lawyers' Guild in Washington. That is, if I can remember it. I have the excuse that none of it was printed and that by the time I got around to making it, midnight had already struck and most of the diners very sensibly had gone home. But here goes:

Mr. Toastmaster and fellow trade unionists: I want to do the finish of my speech first and then stop. I want to talk about the proposals of the President in regard to the Supreme Court. I'm in favor of them. I do not think they solve the fundamental issues. It is even possible that the approach was a mistake. But that is all water under the bridge by now. I'm not an idolater of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. At times, whether he knows it or not, I've disagreed with him violently. But I want to look at the problem as it lies before us here and now.

It has been said that the President is certain to win. I'm not so sure. In any case he has a tough fight on his hands. If he is defeated, it will be because of the liberals who oppose him. Those are the people who worry me. Naturally, I expected to hear that Bishop Manning was in opposition. A friend of mine who doesn't get time to keep up with the newspapers completely tells me that he has invented a very simple and effective system for himself. Whenever Bishop Manning comes out against anything, he is violently for it. He says that so far the system is 100 per cent perfect. It may be hard to put anything on top of that, but in the case of the President's proposals Bishop Manning and A. Lawrence Lowell came out against Roosevelt's plan on the same day. To me that ought to make the case for support 150 per cent.

But I am talking about liberals. That is a little difficult. I've never quite understood what a liberal is—or maybe was would be a better word. Of course, I know that Walter Lippmann is a liberal, but some very curious liberals are coming up out of the cracks just now. I'm always surprised when I read the statements of Amos Pinchot, who invariably refers to himself as a liberal. There ought to be a law. But there isn't. And yet I was still more startled to look at the editorial page of the *Herald Tribune* and find a communication under the caption "A Liberal's View of the Controversy" which was signed John Spargo. If John Spargo is a liberal, then I'm Pierce Butler.

But I want to be fair, within reason. There are true and honest liberals who have taken the rap and borne the heat of the day. And some of these same veterans are muddying the water right now by declaring that they are going to oppose the President's proposal because it doesn't go far enough. I say that it is absolutely necessary to get over the first hurdle before tackling the second. And it seems to me that it would be tragic if men who want no amendment at all and are determined to preserve the status quo manage to defeat Roosevelt by fooling liberals who want to go farther and faster. Of course, I admit the sincerity of the true liberals, but in the present situation I feel impelled to say, "To hell with their sincerity. Damn their stupidity."

I have no desire to be dogmatic about the present political situation. I'm not a political expert. I once ran for Congress on the Socialist ticket, and along about the middle of the campaign I actually got to believe that I might be elected. That turned out to be wrong by about 35,000 votes.

I am not an expert. But I come here to make a report based on what seems to me expert opinion. During the last few weeks I've been coming down to Washington every other day. And I've made it my business to talk to newspapermen in the bar of the National Press Club. I've talked to newspapermen wholly off the record. Almost all these conversations have been limited to the political, which is another word for realistic, aspects of the present situation. I was trying to find out just one thing. I put this question over and over again to men who have been on the "Hill" and around it for many years. I said, "If the proposals of the President are licked, what chance will any amendment have?" And without a dissenting voice, everybody answered, "If Roosevelt is licked in this fight, or if he is forced to compromise deeply, any man in politics who has an amendment can take it up an alley and whistle. Nobody would pay any attention. The political judgment of Washington and of the public will be that the court and the Constitution are dynamite. Nobody will dare to touch the issue for another ten years."

I think these men are right. The consensus of the Washington reporters has always been correct. And so there's your issue. Unless you are for the maintenance of the status quo, you ought to support Roosevelt whether you think his proposals go far enough or not. Armageddon is not just around the corner. We're standing there now. On which side are you going to fight? Are you going to fight standing beside Bishop Manning, A. Lawrence Lowell, the *Herald Tribune,* the Liberty League, and William Randolph Hearst? Make up your mind.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

INTERPRETING SHAKESPEARE

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

OUR popular audience, it appears, is about to rediscover the plays of Shakespeare on the stage. That is one illustration of the fact that commonplaces about Shakespeare's "universality" are true in a wider sense than such sweeping statements usually are in connection with any other great writer. Homer, Dante, Milton, and the rest are not really "universal" to anything like the same extent. They are not capable of interesting one-quarter as many people, and one is tempted sometimes to believe that there was actually some truth in the contention of those romantic critics who held that Shakespeare was not merely the greatest of writers but in some superhuman way completely *sui generis,* or, as one of them put it, not a dramatist but a fact of nature.

Another indication of his supremacy may be found in the fact that no other man seems to have the power of inspiring so much genuinely fruitful scholarship and genuinely interesting criticism. All the great writers are the subject of more or less continuous study and investigation, particularly in universities, and much of it is routine and perfunctory. But Shakespeare criticism and technical Shakespeare scholarship continue somehow to be really fruitful. If some of the issues are dead, others seem always arising to take their places; and erudition becomes not dusty but living.

Illustration of this fact may be found in the 388 pages of an anthology called "Shakespeare Criticism, 1919-35,"* which has been edited by Ann Bradby. Except for the fact that it contains nothing from the books of Dover Wilson, it seems to be a very representative collection and at first sight to illustrate every conceivable approach. Methods range from the statistical in Caroline Spurgeon's "Leading Motives in the Imagery of Shakespeare's Tragedies" to the quasi-impressionistic in G. Wilson Knight's "The Othello Music." There are textual studies like W. W. Greg's "Principles of Emendation in Shakespeare," antiquarian notes like J. Isaacs's "Shakespeare as a Man of the Theater," and there are also more purely literary studies ranging in attitude all the way from that of E. E. Stoll, aggressive champion of those who find merely artifice and convention where others discover almost indescribable subtlety, to that of Granville-Barker, who makes the more usual assumption that though we may read wrong things into the text, we are not likely ever to be more subtle than Shakespeare himself.

Yet for all the heterogeneity of the collection there is a kind of unity. For one thing it is amazing how many of these widely divergent methods and attitudes can produce genuinely relevant results. For another there is the fact that at any given epoch the tendency is for critics and scholars to unite in making certain basic assumptions. Nineteenth-century critics revolted against the formalism of the eighteenth century, while critics of the twentieth are conspicuously less inclined than those of the preceding age to indulge in the merely rhapsodic. They are predominantly analytical even though both the subjects and the methods of analysis are extremely diverse. Broadly speaking, they may be divided into two groups—those who work from the outside in and those who work from the inside out. One group, that is to say, is concerned with history, with the methods of staging plays or printing books, with Elizabethan convictions and interests and fashions, attempting to illuminate Shakespeare by means of the light thrown from things outside him. The other group is more concerned with what he himself says, with significances and meanings which are absolute in the sense that they are independent of their local habitation and name. Yet the two groups are by no means working either at cross purposes or in isolation. They check and correct each other. They are, besides, alike in being, as I said before, rather analytic than rhapsodical. Even the critic least concerned with the antiquarian or the historical keeps his eye on his object—namely, the details of the plays themselves. No criticism could ever dare as little to be in any sense irresponsible because no other criticism was ever itself subject to criticism so watchful and informed.

One may wonder how, if this is true, it is still possible to say so many different things about Shakespeare, all of which seem possibly illuminating and possibly true. There are a dozen different Shakespeares in the minds of different men, and it may seem odd that where so much is known there should still be room for so much divergence of opinion. Indeed, in a biting and witty essay T. S. Eliot speaks sarcastically of the fact when he introduces a serious discussion of the influence of Seneca with the following remarks: "I propose it largely because I believe that after the Montaigne Shakespeare . . . and after the Machiavelli Shakespeare, a stoical or Senecan Shakespeare is almost certain to be produced. I merely wish to disinfect the Senecan Shakespeare before he appears."

The explanation lies, I think, in a fact which Mr. Eliot himself, not alone of course, stresses—the fact, namely, that of all great writers Shakespeare is probably the most completely dramatic in that he was more often and more exclusively than any other interested in realizing and presenting a character, an idea, or an emotion without offering any comment upon it from outside that character

* The World's Classics, Oxford University Press. 80 cents.

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or from the vantage-point of any other idea or emotion. Very divergent interpretations of his work are tenable for much the same reason that very divergent interpretations of "life" are equally tenable, for the reason, that is to say, that none or any of them may be "true" because they are all alike based upon assumptions belonging in categories not recognized in either "life" or Shakespeare's plays. And if to say this seems to approach dangerously close to the conception of Shakespeare as a "fact of nature," I can only say that I think that exaggeration less far from the truth than the opposite exaggeration, which consists in thinking of him as a teacher or a philosopher, and which reaches its ultimate absurdity in the attempt to represent him by opinions and sentiments torn from the plays. Has it ever been pointed out that the two copy-book maxims most often cited were spoken, the first by a dotard and the second by a hypocrite? It was Polonius who said, "To thine own self be true," and Iago who declared, "Who steals my purse steals trash."

Love Poem

BY REUEL DENNEY

Let's go and leave this argument
  Now midnight says to put away
All bitching at our civic crimes
  And what the politicians say.

It isn't that I'm careless of it;
  Disgusted or in sweating terror
I too have waked in middle night
  At what we sometimes live and die for.

I've thought about what men can make;
  How some can roll a rustless steel
Or tell from wheat its native soil.
  That power makes me also sing.

When all that's left of afternoon
  Dies on a steep hill stone by stone
And summitward diminishes,
  I have been sad as anyone

At what our children's sons may say
  About our shabby dividend
Of wisdom in a formula
  And wreck of states we cannot mend.

I too say that it's wonderful
  How after a hundred violent springs
A man's endeavor still is known,
  Returning, like that bird who sings

Each June upon the corner elm,
  With notes identically new.
But here's a serious citizen
  Who'll happily lie down with you.

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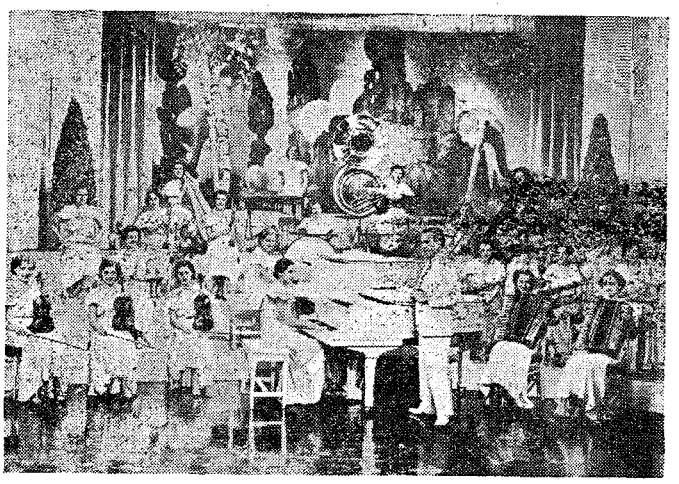

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BOOKS

The Tragedy of an Absolutist

THE FINAL STRUGGLE: BEING COUNTESS TOLSTOY'S DIARY FROM 1910. Translated by Aylmer Maude. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

THE world has taken sides between Leo and Sofya Tolstoy. To those sympathetic with genius a demanding, hysterical wife is always at fault, although she may bear the burden of sixteen pregnancies, thirteen births, and nine living children. To defenders of the family a husband is to blame, however much a genius, if his moral scruples cut at the livelihood of wife and children. It may be that the conflict between the Tolstoys, like all tragedy, is a matter less deserving of blame than of understanding. "The Final Struggle" covers the last year in a marital battle that extended over thirty years. Here are the trivia of each day rising to overwhelming tragedy: the little words of spite and blank despair in the 1910 diaries of wife and husband, supplemented by the accounts of eyewitnesses, relatives, friends, and doctors; a historical introduction by Tolstoy's biographer, Aylmer Maude; and an intimate picture by the son Sergius Tolstoy, who has managed like an artist to render an impartial accounting. From this book alone the reader cannot judge of a married life which endured nearly half a century; it crystallizes only the darker chapters, and the bulk of the story is told by partisans in a mood of passionate exaggeration.

The Tolstoy household at Yasnaya Polyana in the year 1910 was as tense as a Russian novel, divided as it was into two armed camps: on the one side Tolstoy, his literary executor Chertkov, and his daughter Alexandra; on the other side Sofya and her two sons Ilya and Andrey. Everyone kept diaries and held private meetings, a secret will was drawn up on a tree stump in the woods, there were attempts at suicide and threats to run away, there were illness and hysteria, and finally there was Tolstoy's escape in the black of night and his death at a railway station a few days later. The fight was waged for the soul of Tolstoy, for the egos of the others depended upon their relationship with him.

How had they come to this impasse? According to the accumulated legend, which Sergius Tolstoy accepts, the early married years of the Tolstoys were happy, and it was not until Tolstoy became religious and sought to reconcile the deed with the word that the conflict arose. The supposition is that Tolstoy's religious search did not proceed inevitably from his character, and that he might have chosen never to branch off into this moral preoccupation and thus have continued in marital harmony until the end of the chapter.

I cannot agree with this surface view of their relationship. The tragedy of the Tolstoys was inherent in their character. Marriage was a compromise to Leo, whereas to Sofya it was the organizing principle of her being. He came to it at the late age of thirty-four, suspicious of sensual pleasures; she came to it romantically, an ordinary young girl destined to marry a great and distinguished writer. Wrapped in his quest of the good, the beautiful, and the true, Tolstoy had to withdraw from private life. Sofya found her fulfilment in helping her husband, caring for the children, attending to the business of the estate.

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Thus their division of labor: he, the artist doomed to live by absolutes, come what may; she, the family provider driven to press for security, whatever the cost. This battle between male and female, between genius and common sense, never let up. But it brought its gifts to Leo and through him to the world. Experiencing love, he created Natasha at the ball and proud Anna Karenina. He was a solemn, awkward man who was brought through marriage into contact with ordinary things, and celebrated for later generations children at play, sleigh rides, hunts, childbirth. Perhaps because of his devastating experiences he drew his heroes in his own likeness as troubled seekers for truth, and the women in the image of his wife—glorious, fierce, and trivial. His domestic philosophy, like that of Freud, was based upon the tragedy of the bedroom.

We must not believe that it was Sofya's badgering that made Tolstoy unhappy, or her petty reasoning that kept him from becoming a hermit or a peasant. His body's needs prevented celibacy, and a deep sense of realism (like that of Levin, who once thought of marrying a peasant girl) made it impossible for him to adopt the ways of the mujik. For better or worse he remained what he was created—sensual and an aristocrat. Long before Sofya married Leo Tolstoy, he tried in the true Russian spirit to deny himself and achieve perfection. But he could not find the good life among his fellows in battle, or in family obligations, or in nearness to God or peasant. His marriage with Sofya Behrs was in itself only an episode in his search for moral peace.

But there was no peace, for within him were the sources of his own contradictions. The phases of his development overlapped, causing inner tension. He was at once sensual lover and ascetic, he wanted the warmth of a family and the peace of a monastery; he was an egoist who believed in meekness, a stubborn opponent who preached non-resistance; he would not submit to authority and yet imposed his will on others; he believed in love for humanity but often could not love the individuals near him; he was comforted by the material world and continued to search for God. In short, he dug so deeply into his own nature that he discovered and embodied the dualities at the core of existence, and because of his greed for life he held on to them all.

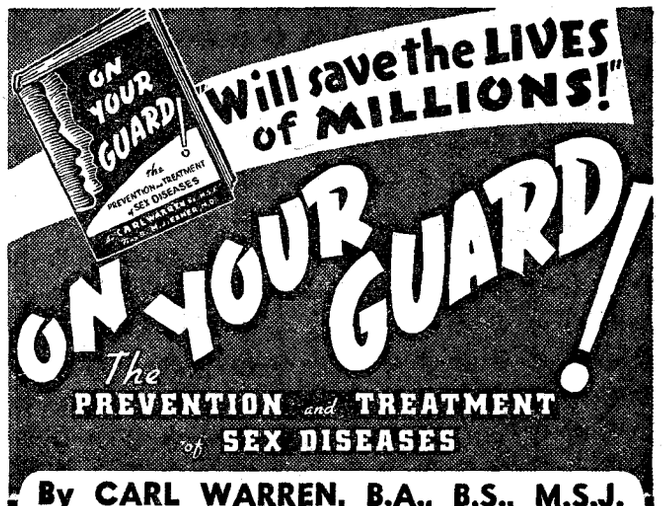
Thus the book represents the tragedy of an absolutist whose absolutes came to grief in his private life. For in the daily round we live less by principles than by mutual tolerance, less by logic than by humor. Tolstoy, the absolutist, paid in pain for his insights into the universe. Out of this pain arose miraculous books—not only the long, impassioned novels but also the stories and essays on women, death, God, beauty, and poverty, wherein he dared to face the realities from which the weak must flee. Faustus-like, Tolstoy tried to encompass all experience, and found himself at last a magnificent failure.

ANITA MARBURG

The Natural in the Human

ANNA BECKER. By Max White. Stackpole Sons. $2.50.

IN MARRYING D. H. Lawrence to Gertrude Stein, the author of this novel has achieved a remarkable combination of elements. This vision of a woman's rebirth, of the fulfilment of her senses and instincts, seems directly derived from Lawrence, and the fine brevity of the prose, its idyllic notes, its simplicity at once tender and precise, are reminiscent of the early Stein. And lest a lineage so patently literary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should appear artificial and thus prejudice us against its bearer, it should be observed that the particular way in which he has tempered and synthesized his two elements is creatively of the utmost interest. By using the first influence with the moderation of his own need he has cured it of those spasms of salvation-mongering we thought inherent in it, and by pruning the verbal fetishes off the second he has presented it normatively, minus that quality commonly considered objectionable as well as organic to the attitude and intention behind it. Where the fruitfulness of Mr. White's method comes in is that by freeing these elements from the strictly *individual* stamp of their creators, he has emphasized their objective meanings and thus made a more balanced judgment of them so much easier.

At first sight Anna Becker, proprietress of a tea-shop in a conservative college town in New Hampshire, appears to be a woman whose conventions make up her character. Some things, however, tend to give her away. A beautiful woman, she finds no pleasure in looking at herself in the mirror, for she sees there a stranger who does not at all look like the person both the town and she herself think she is. The arrival of the quarryman, Steve Larsen, upsets the weight of her maidenly years, for Larsen, a man as natural as the homely syllables of his name, lets nothing impede him from getting to "the core of what he likes" and, desiring Anna, he takes her against her will. This "primitive" workingman blackmails her into submission, and though the circumstances of her life in the town amply explain her fear of forcibly ejecting him from her house, there is yet more than a hint of ambiguity in her inability to resist him. Time passes, and against the background of the seasons vivified through a superb use of nature symbolism, we witness the gradual destruction of Anna's conventions by the secret efforts of her "woman's nature" and Larsen's sure and "inevitable" behavior. She finds the strength to defy her neighbors, who isolate her socially, and finally she emerges as a woman "new and alive," sharing the abundance and movement of natural things.

The question that must be asked is why the two elements interwoven in this novel work so well together. To my mind, the reply is to be sought in the fact that both elements, from different angles and with unequal pressure, offer simplified solutions, whose secret is salvation from within, to modern problems. What is Lawrence's mysticism of the body if not the obverse side of the older mysticism of the soul? And being a simplification, this mystical doctrine cannot but take its toll, of course, in the creation of character. Whatever credibility Larsen has is due more to our memories of his type in other novels than to our recognition of him as a part of living experience. He is too messianic to serve as a real and lasting image of release, though he appeals to our sensibility as a modern version of the romantic Noble Savage of a bygone age.

This book is blurbed as a "Madame Bovary" of New England—a comparison that strikes me as particularly inept. Emma's passion brings her to her death, while Anna's brings her life: one finds in love only a surcease from boredom, the other a joyous identification with the real world. Moreover, in Mr. White's prose there is not a whiff of those emanations of M. Homais's pharmacy, that is to say, of that obsession with the commonplace, the local, and the flavor of the purely human so peculiar to French realism. Flaubert stressed the human in the natural, Lawrence the natural in the human.

PHILIP RAHV

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Wrong Number

OF MICE AND MEN. By John Steinbeck. Covici-Friede. $2.

ALL but one of the persons in Mr. Steinbeck's extremely brief novel are subhuman if the range of the word human is understood to coincide with the range thus far established by fiction. Two of them are evil, one of them is dangerous without meaning to be, and all of them are ignorant—all of them, that is, except the one who shall be named hereafter. Far from knowing the grammar of conduct, they do not even know its orthography. No two of their thoughts are consecutive, nor for that matter do they think; it is rather that each of them follows some instinct as a bull follows the chain which runs through a hole in his nose, or as a crab moves toward its prey. The scene is a ranch in California, and the bunk-house talk is terrific—God damn, Jesus Christ, what the hell, you crazy bastard, I gotta gut ache, and things like that. The dialect never varies, just as the story never runs uphill.

George and Lennie, the itinerant workers who come to the ranch one day with a dream of the little farm they will own as soon as they get the jack together, seem to think their new job will last at least that long; but the reader knows from the beginning that it will not last, for Lennie is a half-witted giant with a passion for petting mice—or rabbits, or pups, or girls—and for killing them when they don't like it. He is doomed in this book to kill Curley's wife; that is obvious; and then—. Lennie, you see, cannot help shaking small helpless creatures until their necks are broken, just as George cannot relinquish his dream, and just as Curley cannot ever stop being a beast of jealousy. They are wound up to act that way, and the best they can do is run down; which is what happens when Mr. Steinbeck comes to his last mechanical page.

What, however, of the one exception? Ah, he is Slim the jerkline skinner, the tall man with the "God-like eyes" that get fastened on you so that you can't think of anything else for a while. "There was a gravity in his manner and a quiet so profound that all talk stopped when he spoke. . . . His hatchet face was ageless. He might have been thirty-five or fifty. His ear heard more than was said to him, and his slow speech had overtones not of thought, but of understanding beyond thought. His hands, large and lean, were as delicate in their action as those of a temple dancer." He looks through people and beyond them—a feat never accomplished save in mechanical novels. And he understands—why, he understands everything that Mr. Steinbeck understands. It is the merest accident of education that he talks like the rest; "Jesus, he's jes' like a kid, ain't he," he says. If he had his creator's refinement of tongue he could write such sentences as this one which introduces Lennie: "His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely and only moved because the heavy hands were pendula." It wouldn't have done to write pendulums. That would have given the real sound and look of Lennie, and besides it is a real word.

Mr. Steinbeck, I take it, has not been interested in reality of any kind. His jerkline skinner (mule driver) is as hopelessly above the human range as Lennie or Candy or Curley's painted wife is below it. All is extreme here; everybody is a doll; and if there is a kick in the story it is given us from some source which we cannot see, as when a goose walks over our grave, or as when in the middle of the night the telephone rings sharply and it is the wrong number. We shall remember it about that long.

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A Man and an Administration

HAMILTON FISH: THE INNER HISTORY OF THE GRANT ADMINISTRATION. By Allan Nevins. Dodd, Mead and Company. $5.

WHICH of our Presidential administrations was the worst is still a matter of dispute among American historians, but after reading Dr. Nevins's excellent volume I am persuaded that General Grant's deserves the palm. While this is a long book, it escapes being tedious. The author has carefully concealed most of the scaffolding of scholarship. His narrative often steers a tortuous course through the shoals of obscure diplomatic minutiae, such as the minor Santo Dominican skulduggeries or the final passages at arms over the Alabama arbitration. Still, it has movement, occasionally exhibits pleasing irony, and often ascends to heights of moving prose. Dr. Nevins has added to his already well-established reputation by producing another enduring book.

In this task the fact that Hamilton Fish kept a compendious diary was of the greatest aid to him. This diary bids fair to alter fundamentally Fish's own historical position, and it likewise throws a painfully bright light on certain obscurities in Grant's Presidential career. Historians of our own times are sure to be vastly disadvantaged by the dearth of diarists today, but during the Civil War and Reconstruction diaries were still being kept by important men. The opinionated, irascible, crabbed, self-righteous, and still highly revealing record of Gideon Welles is an example. Hamilton Fish's diary bids fair to be as useful for the years of Grant. It has not yet been published in its entirety, but the copious excerpts in this present volume whet one's appetite for the full text.

Fish himself deserved well of his country. A New Yorker of patroon stock, born in the Federalist tradition, he had a distinguished pre-war career, including a Senate term. Then came a decade of quasi-retirement, after which, to his own surprise as much as that of the country, he was inducted into Grant's Cabinet as Secretary of State. Again and again planning to resign, he stayed the whole eight years, and managed to keep the State Department free from the stupidities and scandals that afflicted nearly every other administrative branch under Grant.

To do this was no easy job. While Nevins acquits the General of personal dishonesty, he agrees with other historians that there were infirmities in his character which made him a most inappropriate choice for the White House. In the first place, it was General and not President Grant: his Cabinet ministers were subordinates to be ordered. The pattern of his appointments was very bad: to a shameful nepotism was added a partiality to names suggested by his shabby "kitchen cabinet." To this was added a stubborn defense of revealed blunderers or corruptionists which indicated a moral obtuseness of Grant's part. And finally there was a complete casualness about the functional efficiency of governmental operation; Grant's slipshod mode of handling the Presidential duties often brought Fish to the resignation point.

Dr. Nevins adds few new scandals to the familiar record, but he does supply corroborating details which further deepen the black of official turpitude. During these dark years, however, no breath of scandal ever touched Fish, and he left office in 1877 with the general confidence and esteem of the country. And with reason, for he had brought to solution the two thorniest controversies with foreign nations which the United States had had since Commodore Wilkes stopped the British steamer Trent: he had successfully liquidated our Civil War grievances against Great Britain; and in spite of the exacerbations of Cuba in revolt, he had kept us out of war with Spain. In both instances there had been almost as many obstacles at home as abroad. Yet with a patience and vision extraordinary for the epoch, he kept the helm steady and steered the bark successfully to port.

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DRAMA

Excuse My Glove

MOST readers of the *New Yorker* remember the adventures of Arthur Kober's Bella, who frequently attended "formals" and was "not the type girl accustomed to talk to young men I haven't been properly introduced to." Bella herself does not appear in Mr. Kober's new play, "Having Wonderful Time" (Lyceum Theater), but a dozen or more of her friends do, and despite one reference to *The Nation* not intended to be too complimentary I must confess that they furnish a very amusing evening. The scene is Kamp Karefree somewhere in the Berkshires, and the plot concerns those vacation romances which must bloom rapidly if they are to bloom at all. The important thing, however, is neither plot nor setting but a study of the folk ways

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current among Jewish stenographers and their struggling boy friends.

Mr. Kober is not, of course, the first to exploit this milieu. His world is roughly the same as that of writers as wildly unlike as Milt Gross and Clifford Odets. Yet Mr. Kober has a manner completely his own, and his material seems delightfully fresh, partly because he centers his attention upon the young men and women pathetically reaching out toward a culture and a tradition of manners not theirs by inheritance, even more because the temper of his compassionate satire is unmistakably individual. What could so easily be burlesque is actually comedy, and what might be offensively condescending is almost tender. His lovers who do not forget to beg pardon for pointing when they wish to call attention to the moon are not merely funny. They are, as a matter of fact, singularly engaging as well.

I do not know why the common assumption is made that there is some peculiar virtue in "folk plays" dealing with the remoter rural minorities in the United States or elsewhere. Mr. Kober's characters may not be close to the soil but they are certainly close to the concrete, and that is, for us, quite as important. From this little play the visitor from Mars could easily deduce the entire culture of a social group at least a million strong, and the piece is as much a folk play as if it dealt with Georgia crackers or Cape Cod fishermen.

Perhaps I should add that considered purely as a piece of playwriting "Having Wonderful Time" is not as good as the material out of which it is made. Even though much of it is not taken directly from Mr. Kober's original sketches, it is obvious that he has had some difficulty in making the transition from one form to another, and that he has had recourse to conventional dramatic devices which occasionally produce an effect of artificiality not at all in keeping with dialogue or characterization. The play was twice postponed, and one may assume that a good deal of tinkering has been done in an effort to remove just these faults; but that effort has not been wholly successful, for there are still moments when the machinery creaks. Nevertheless, the piece will be, I believe, extremely popular, and it deserves to be. There are excellent performances by Katherine Lock, Janet Fox, Jules Garfield, and a number of minor players.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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ISSUING vocal and organ works of Bach in the form of piano transcriptions by Alexander Kelberine (four ten-inch and two twelve-inch records, $10) is what Victor calls bringing Bach "down to simple terms that we all can understand." In fact, however, the piano lends itself least to clear presentation of Bach's polyphony; all that Mr. Kelberine and Jeanne Behrend can do is to separate out one melodic line from the texture by thumping it out note by note; and I cannot imagine any method of presentation that would make the beauty of the works more obscure. If Victor really wants to make this beauty accessible, all it has to do is to have the music sung or played in its original form. And I must add that some of the recording in this set is poor.

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favorite operatic excerpts by singers of the Metropolitan. Tibbett is represented by two items: the Toreador's Song from "Carmen" and "Largo al factotum" from the "Barber of Seville"; and if I were asked what I meant by the expression "ham singing," I should say, "Listen to Tibbett's record of 'Largo al factotum.'" Excellent are Pons's singing of "Caro Nome" from "Rigoletto," John Charles Thomas's of "Di Provenza" from "La Traviata," and Richard Crooks's of "The Dream" from "Manon." Helen Jepson, raised to stardom in this album, exhibits a lovely voice in "Depuis le jour" from "Louise"; Bori is excessively coy in "Mi Chiamano Mimi" from "La Bohème"; Martinelli sings "Celeste Aïda" in his loud and constricted fashion; and there are two sides from Victor's fine set of Act I of "Die Walküre," one side featuring Melchior, the other Lotte Lehmann, who emerges as the greatest star in this collection.

Except for a few details of overemphasis and wilfulness in tempos, Koussevitzky's performance of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony with the Boston Symphony (Victor: five records, $10) is refreshingly and effectively straightforward. The recording is excellent in fidelity and sonority, but I am disturbed by the reverberations in the empty hall in which it was made, and by the fact that when instruments play softly they seem to recede into the distance. And what it is that will lead a recording manager and a conductor, in the year 1936, to destroy the formal balance of the third movement by cutting out seventy-five measures in order to get the movement all on one side and the entire work all on nine sides, and this in order to use for a Tchaikovsky waltz the tenth side that might have been used for the third movement—this, with some other mental processes manifested in recording, is beyond my comprehension.

The musical style of Heifetz's playing rarely satisfies me, but his performance of Fauré's Sonata in A, Opus 13, is one of the rare instances; and it is superbly recorded (Victor: three records, $6.50). The work itself, however, is characteristic in its empty fluency.

The first record to give the full measure of Flagstad's voice, musical feeling, and taste is a Victor single ($1.50) on which she sings in German Grieg's "I Love You" and "A Dream." All one asks now is music more worthy of her artistic resources. And the same point is to be made concerning Marian Anderson, who is heard on a Victor single ($1.50) in two more arrangements of Negro spirituals: "Go Down Moses" and "My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord." On another Victor single ($2) Helen Jepson sings two excerpts from Hageman's "Caponsacchi," which have as little value as music can have. Villa Lobo's "Choro No. 7," which the composer conducts on a Victor record ($1.50) you can afford to neglect.

On Columbia single records Beecham's performance of Bizet's "L'Arlésienne" Suite No. 1 with the London Philharmonic is excellent, but the recording is poor in spots (two records, $3); Molajoli gives a fine performance, well recorded, of Cherubini's Overture to "Medea" with the Milan Symphony (one record, $1.50).

Musicraft has issued Bach's Partita No. 5, performed on the harpsichord by Ralph Kirkpatrick (two records, $3). Ordinarily surface noise is covered by the recorded sound; but on the first side of these records the music, which seems under-recorded, is obscured by the noise. On the other three sides one hears more of the harpsichord, but still too much of the surface, on which there are blemishes that indicate poor pressing. With the records so bad there is almost no point in adding that the music is dull.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Violence in Indiana

Dear Sirs: On February 12, at Anderson, Indiana, ten persons were hurt in what the newspapers described as a "new strike clash"—presumably an aftermath of the automobile strike—involving union men from Flint and Detroit. As a result of the melee, which occurred at an obscure tavern, thirteen men were arrested, and martial law was declared. Two of those arrested — union sympathizers — were taken to a hospital seriously wounded. According to the account of the New York *Times,* the police of Anderson "blamed union sympathizers for the outbreak which led to martial law. Police Chief Joseph Carney said that . . . two cars containing about a dozen men drove up to a tavern operated by Emory Shipley . . . and demanded that a non-union worker at the General Motors Delco-Remy plant be sent out to them."

"Shipley informed them," continued the account, "that the person they sought was not in the tavern, and afterward several shots were fired and rocks were thrown at his place, he told the police. He obtained a shotgun and fired both barrels at the two cars, which were then driving away."

One of the wounded men, however, tells a different story. Heaton Vorse was one of the "union sympathizers" who had come to Anderson from Flint (it should be borne in mind that this is not a crime). The accompanying letter was written by Mr. Vorse, who is still in the hospital in Anderson, to his wife. Along with others, he is under arrest on serious charges of inciting to riot. His letter throws a different light on an incident which may give rise to another unjust and long-drawn-out persecution of working-class victims. The authorities of Anderson have made no secret of their anti-union attitude. The La Follette committee would do well to investigate the Anderson affair with all possible speed. M. M.

New York, March 1

Dear——: All was quiet in Anderson. Too quiet. The vigilantes had evidently been tipped off. Went up into union hall. A big sign, "Thank you, Flint" hung in the assembly room. Units from Detroit, Toledo, and even Cleveland started to drift in. Since it was obvious that there would be no trouble, plans were being formed for a big labor parade.

Many of the Flint contingent, myself included, found their way to the barroom downstairs, for the sheer joy of ordering *beer.* Flint and Genessee County were made dry by Murphy, remember. No one drank heavily. An Anderson boy called me to his table and introduced me to his pretty wife and sister. Other Flint and Anderson boys joined us from time to time. It was all gay and social.

I was called upstairs to do my turn on the door. (Note: Union halls here aren't free to the world. You have to have damned satisfactory credentials to enter, as a guard against stools, finks, etc.) Anderson's hall had four on duty that evening, Anderson, Flint, Toledo, Cleveland. A steady stream of men were flowing in and out. It kept us busy checking. As the moments passed, the tension eased. If any bloodthirsty souls were disappointed, they didn't show it.

A sudden commotion at the foot of the stairs. A young fellow somewhat bruised about the face is hustled up the stairs. I understand that he has been beaten up by vigilantes at the "Gold Band" tavern. There are other union men out there who are in danger.

"Flint upstairs!" I check the boys through and follow the last one into a conference room. There is some question as to where the place is, but off we go. Our car was the first out. We discovered the tavern to be a shanty in shanty town, varying only from the other scattered ugly boxes in that it had a glass front. Another carload drew up. We walked toward the tavern. At which point, the bartender drew a shotgun from beneath the bar and fired through the window. I ducked in time to miss the shot, but the flying glass burned my forehead.

At this point I decided that I didn't want any, and started moving. The decision was fairly unanimous. The bartender fired twice more through the broken window and then came out the door. Another man scooted out of a side door and took up an observation post about ten yards away. He shouted directions to the bartender. It seemed so well planned.

As I ran I saw that the barkeeper had cornered three boys who had taken refuge behind a parked sedan. He hounded them, ducking back and forth till he got one of them—in the back—Rose (the other badly wounded boy, now in the hospital with me). I heard the man on observation shout, "Get that one running!" I got it. The newspapers carried that he was protecting his property.

Men can be so amazingly gentle. The kindliness and care given me by the boys who carried me to the hospital made the nurse and doctor in charge seem almost brutal. All of them are under arrest for their kindness. HEATON VORSE

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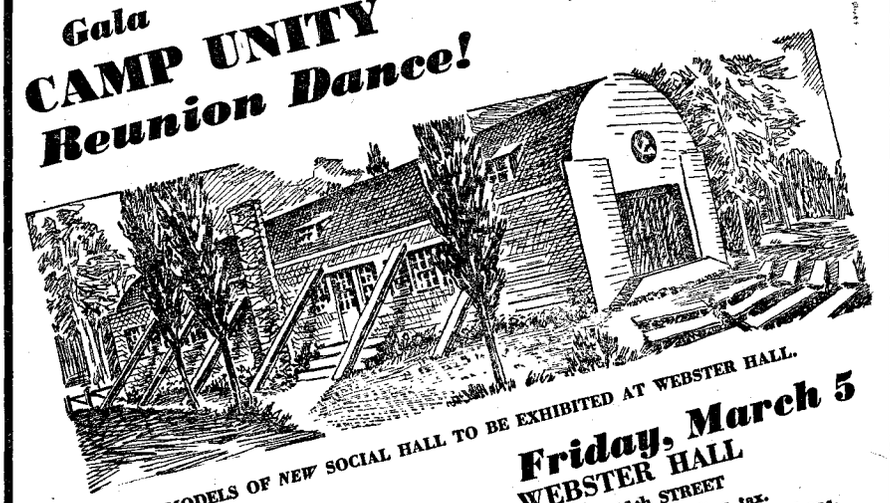

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